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FOOTPATHS.

ALL round the shores of the island where I dwell there runs a winding path which is probably as old as the settlement of the country, and which has been kept open with pertinacious fidelity by the fishermen whose right of way it represents. In some places, as between Fort Adams and Castle Hill, it exists in its primitive form, as an irregular track above rough cliffs, whence you look down upon the entrance to the harbor and watch the white-sailed schooners that glide beneath. Elsewhere the high-road has usurped its place, and you have the privilege of the path without its charm. Along our eastern cliffs it runs for more than two miles in the rear of beautiful estates, whose owners have seized on it, and graded it, and gravelled it, and made stiles for it, and done for it everything that landscape-gardening could do, while leaving it a footpath still. You walk there with croquet and roses on the one side, and with floating loons and wild ducks on the other. In other places the path grows wilder, and has ramifications striking boldly across the peninsula through rough

moorland and among great ledges of rock, where you may walk for hours out of sight of all but some sportsman with his gun, or some truant-boy with dripping water-lilies. There is always a charm to me in the inexplicable windings of these wayward tracks; yet I like the path best where it is nearest the ocean, where one only looks upon blue sea and snowy sails and floating gulls, but where one hears on the landward side the melodious and plaintive drawl of the meadow-lark, most patient of summer visitors, and, indeed, lingering on this island almost the whole year round.

But who cares whither a footpath leads? The charm is in the path itself, its promise of something that the high-road cannot yield. Away from habitations, you know that the fisherman, the geologist, the botanist have been there, or that the cows have been driven home and that somewhere there are bars and a milk-pail. Even in the midst of houses, the path suggests school-children with their luncheon-baskets, or workmen seeking eagerly the noonday interval or the twilight

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rest. A footpath cannot be quite spoiled, so long as it remains such; you can make a road a mere avenue for fast horses or showy women, but this humbler track keeps its simplicity, and if a queen comes walking through it, she comes but as a village maid. On Sunday, when it is not etiquette for our fashionables to drive, but only to walk along the cliffs, I am struck by the more innocent and wholesome look imparted by that novel position; I have seen a fine lady pause under such circumstances and pick a wild-flower; she knew how to do it. A footpath imparts its own character, while that of a street or road is imposed upon it by those who dwell beside it or pass over it; indeed, roads become picturesque only when they are called lanes and make believe that they are but paths.

The very irregularity of a footpath makes half its charm. So much of loitering and indolence and impulse have gone to its formation, that all which is stiff and military has been left out. I observed that the very dikes of the Southern rice plantations did not succeed in being rectilinear, though the general effect was that of Tennyson's "flowery squares." Even the country road, which is but an enlarged footpath, is never quite straight, as Thoreau long since observed, noting it with his surveyor's eye. I read in his unpublished diary: "The law that plants the rushes in waving lines along the edge of a pond, and that curves the pond shore itself, incessantly beats against the straight fences and highways of men, and makes them conform to the line of beauty at last." It is this unintentional adaptation that makes a footpath so indestructible. Instead of striking across the natural lines, it conforms to them, nestles into the hollow, skirts the precipice, avoids the morass. An unconscious landscape-gardener, it seeks the most convenient course, never doubting that grace will follow. Thus Mitchell, at his "Edgewood" farm, wishing to decide on the most picturesque avenue to his front door, ordered

a heavy load of stone to be hauled across the field, and bade the driver seek the easiest grades, at whatever cost of curvature. The avenue followed the path thus made.

And when a footpath falls thus unobtrusively into its place, all natural forces seem to sympathize with it, and help it to fulfil its destiny. Once made a well-defined track through a wood, and presently the overflowed brooks seek it for a channel, the obstructed winds draw through it, the fox and woodchuck travel by it, the catbird and robin build near it, the bee and swallow make a high-road of its convenient thoroughfare. In winter the first snows mark it with a white line; as you wander through you hear the blue-jay's cry, and see the hurrying flight of the sparrow; the graceful outlines of the leafless bushes are revealed, and the clinging bird's-nests, "leaves that do not fall," give happy memories of summer homes. Thus Nature meets man half-way. The paths of the wild forest and of the rural neighborhood are not at all the same thing; indeed, a "spotted trail," marked only by the woodman's axe-marks on the trees, is not a footpath. Thoreau, who is sometimes foolishly accused of having sought to be a mere savage, understood this distinction well. "A man changes by his presence," he says in his unpublished diary, "the very nature of the trees. The poet's is not a logger's path, but a woodman's, — the logger and pioneer have preceded him, and banished decaying wood and the spongy mosses which feed on it, and built hearths and humanized nature for him. For a permanent residence, there can be no comparison between this and the wilderness. Our woods are sylvan, and their inhabitants woodsmen and rustics; that is, a *selvaggia* and its inhabitants *salvages*." What Thoreau loved, like all men of healthy minds, was the occasional experience of untamed wildness. "I love to see occasionally," he adds, "a man from whom the *usnea* (lichen) hangs as gracefully as from a spruce."

It is footpaths that take us nearest both to nature and to man. No high-road, not even a lane, conducts to the deeper recesses of the wood, where you hear the wood-thrush or find the climbing-fern. There are a thousand concealed fitnesses in nature, rhymed correspondences of bird and blossom, for which you must seek through the most hidden paths; as when you come upon some black brook so palisaded with cardinal-flowers as to seem "a stream of sunsets"; or trace its shadowy course till it spreads into some forest-pool, above which that rare and patrician insect, the *Agrian* dragon-fly, flits and hovers perpetually, as if the darkness and the cool had taken wings. The dark brown pellucid water sleeps between banks of softest moss; white stars of twin flowers creep close to the brink, delicate sprays of dewberry trail over it, and the emerald tips of drooping leaves forever tantalize the still surface. Above these the slender dark blue insect waves his dusky wings, like a liberated ripple of the brook, and takes the few stray sunbeams on his lustrous form. Whence came this correspondence between this beautiful shy creature and the moist, dark nooks, shot through with stray and transitory sunbeams, where it dwells? The analogy is as unmistakable as that between the scorching heats of summer and the shrill cry of the cicada that gives them voice. They suggest questions that no *savant* can answer, mysteries that wait like Goethe's secret of morphology, till a sufficient poet can be born. And we, meanwhile, stand helpless in their presence, as one waits besides the telegraphic wire, while it hums and vibrates, charged with all fascinating secrets, above the heads of a wondering world.

And it is the presence of pathways on the earth by which we know that it is the habitation of man; in the loneliest desert, they open to us a common humanity. It is the absence of these that makes us lonely on the ocean, and makes us glad to watch even the track of our own vessel. But on the mountain-top, how eagerly we trace out the

"road that brings places together," as Schiller says. It is the first thing we look for; till we have found it, each scattered village has a lonely and churlish look, but the glimpse of a furlong of road puts them all in friendly relations. The narrower the path seen, the more domestic and familiar it looks. The railroad may represent the capitalist or the government; the high-road indicates what the surveyor or the county commissioners thought best; but the footpath shows what the people needed. Its associations are with beauty and humble life, — the boy with his dog, the little girl with her fagots, the pedler with his pack; cheery companions they are or ought to be.

"Jog on, jog on the footpath way,
And merrily bent the stile-a :
A merry heart goes all the day,
Your sad one tires in a mile-a."

The footpath takes you across the farms and behind the houses; you are admitted to the family secrets and form a personal acquaintance. Even if you take the wrong path, it only leads you "across-lots" to some man ploughing, or some old woman picking berries, — perhaps a very spicy acquaintance, whom the road would never have brought to light. If you are left astray in the woods, that only teaches you to observe landmarks more closely, or to leave straws and stakes for landmarks, like a gypsy's *patteran*, to show the ways already traversed. There is a healthy vigor in the mind of a boy, who would like of all things to be lost in the woods, to build a fire out of doors, and sleep under a tree or in a haystack. Civilization is tiresome and enfeebling, unless we occasionally give it the relish of a little outlawry and approach in imagination, at least, the zest of a gypsy life. The records of pedestrian journeys, the *Wanderjahre* and memoirs of good-for-nothings, and all the delightful German forest literature, — these belong to the footpath side of our nature. The passage best remembered in all Bayard Taylor's travels is the ecstasy of his Thuringian forester, who said: "I recall the time

when just a sunny morning made me so happy that I did not know what to do with myself. One day in spring, as I went through the woods and saw the shadows of the young leaves upon the moss, and smelt the buds of the firs and larches, and thought to myself, 'All thy life is to be spent in the splendid forest,' I actually threw myself down and rolled in the grass like a dog, over and over, crazy with joy. I have longed to have the same feeling once more in life, but it never comes back again."

It is the charm of pedestrian journeys that they convert the grandest avenues to footpaths. Through them alone we gain intimate knowledge of the people, and of nature, and indeed of ourselves. It is easy to hurry too fast for our best reflections, which, as the old monk said of perfection, must not be sought by flying, but by walking, "*Perfectionis via non pervolanda sed perambulanda.*" The thoughts that the railway affords us are dusty thoughts; we ask the news, read the journals, question our neighbor, and wish to know what is going on, because we are a part of it. It is only in the footpath that our minds, like our bodies, move slowly, and we traverse thought, like space, with a patient thoroughness. Rousseau said that he had never experienced so much, existed so thoroughly, lived so truly, and been so wholly himself, as during his travels on foot.

What can Hawthorne mean by saying in his English diary that "an American would never understand the passage in Bunyan about Christian and Hopeful going astray along a by-path into the grounds of Giant Despair, from there being no stiles and by-paths in our country"? So much of the charm of American pedestrianism lies in the by-paths! For instance, the whole interior of Cape Ann, beyond Gloucester, is a continuous woodland, with granite ledges everywhere cropping out, around which the high-road winds, following the curving and indented line of the sea, and dotted here and there with fishing hamlets. This

whole interior is traversed by a network of footpaths, rarely passable for any wagon, and not always for a horse, but enabling the pedestrian to go from any one of these villages to any other, in a line almost direct, and always under an agreeable shade. By the longest of these hidden ways, one may go from Pigeon Cove to Gloucester, ten miles, without seeing a public road. In the little inn at the former village there used to hang an old map of this whole forest region, giving a chart of some of these paths; which were said to date back to the first settlement of the country. One of them, for instance, was called "Old Road from Sandy Bay to Squam Meeting-house through the Woods"; but the road is now scarcely even a bridle-path, and the most faithful worshipper could not seek Squam Meeting-house in the family chaise. Those woods are at last being devastated; but when I first knew that region, it was as good as any German forest. Often we stepped almost from the edge of the sea into some gap in the woods; there seemed hardly more than a rabbit-track, yet presently we met some wayfarer who had crossed the Cape by it. A piny dell gave some vista of the broad sea we were leaving, and an opening in the woods displayed another blue sea-line before; the encountering breezes interchanged odors of berry-bushes and scent of brine; penetrating farther among oaks and chestnuts, we come upon some little cottage, quaint and sheltered as any Spenser drew; it was built on no high-road, and turned its vine-clad gable away from even the footpath. Then the ground rose and other breezes came; perhaps we climbed trees to look for landmarks, and saw only, still farther in the woods, some great cliff of granite or the derrick of an unseen quarry. Three miles inland, as I remember, we found the hearthstones of a vanished settlement; then we passed a swamp with cardinal-flowers; then a cathedral of noble pines, topped with crow's-nests. If we had not gone astray by this time, we presently emerged on Dogtown Com-

mon, an elevated table-land, overspread with great boulders as with houses, and encircled with a girdle of green woods and an outer girdle of blue sea. I know of nothing like that gray waste of boulders; it is a natural Salisbury Plain, of which icebergs and ocean-currents were the Druidic builders; the multitude of couchant monsters give one a sense of suspended life; you feel as if they must speak and answer to each other in the silent nights, but by day only the wandering sea-birds seek them, on their way across the Cape, and the sweet-bay and green fern imbed them in a softer and deeper setting as the years go by. This is the "height of ground" of that wild footpath; but as you recede farther from the outer ocean and approach Gloucester, you come among still wilder ledges, unsafe without a guide, and you find in one place a cluster of deserted houses, too difficult of access to remove even their materials, so that they are left to moulder alone. I used to wander in those woods, summer after summer, till I had made my own chart of their devious tracks, and now when I close my eyes in this Oldport midsummer, the soft Italian air takes on something of a Scandinavian vigor; for the incessant roll of carriages I hear the tinkle of the quarryman's hammer and the veery's song; and I long for those perfumed and breezy pastures, and for those promontories of granite where the fresh water is nectar and the salt sea has a regal blue.

I recall another footpath near Worcester, Massachusetts, which leads up from the low meadows into the wildest region of all that vicinity, Tatesset Hill. Leaving behind you the open pastures where the cattle lie beneath the chestnut-trees or drink from the shallow brook, you pass among the birches and maples, where the woodman's shanty stands in the clearing, and the raspberry-fields are merry with children's voices. The familiar birds and butterflies linger behind with them, and in the upper and more sacred depths the wood-thrush chants his lit-

any and the brown mountain butterflies hover among the scented vines. Higher yet rises the "Rattlesnake Ledge," spreading over one side of the summit a black avalanche of broken rock, now overgrown with reindeer-moss and filled with tufts of the smaller wild geranium. Just below this ledge, amid a dark, dense tract of second-growth forest, masked here and there with grape-vines, studded with rare orchises, and pierced by a brook that vanishes suddenly where the ground sinks away and lets the blue distance in, there is a little monument to which the footpath leads, and which always seemed to me as wild a memorial of forgotten superstition as the traveller finds amid the forests of Japan.

It was erected by a man called Solomon Pearson (not to give his name too closely), a quiet, thoughtful farmer, long-bearded, low-voiced, and with that aspect of wild refinement which an ideal life brings forth even in quite uninstructed men. At the height of the "Second Advent" excitement this man resolved to build for himself upon these remote rocks a house which should escape the wrath to come, and should endure even amid a burning and transformed earth. Thinking, as he once said to me, that, "if the First Dispensation had been strong enough to endure, there would have been no need of a Second," he resolved to build for his part something which should possess permanence at least. And there still remains on that high hillside the small beginning that he made.

There are four low stone walls, three feet thick, built solidly together without cement, and without the trace of tools. The end-walls are nine feet high (the sides being lower) and are firmly united by a strong iron ridge-pole, perhaps fifteen feet long, which is imbedded at each end in the stone. Other masses of iron lie around unused, in sheets, bars, and coils, brought with slow labor by the builder from far below. The whole building was designed to be made of stone and iron. It is now covered with creeping vines

and the *débris* of the hillside; but though its construction had been long discontinued when I saw it, the interior was still kept scrupulously clean through the care of this modern Solomon, who often visited his shrine.

An arch in the terminal wall admits the visitor to the small roofless temple, and he sees before him, imbedded in the centre of the floor, a large smooth block of white marble, where the deed of this spot of land was to have been recorded, in hopes to preserve it even after the globe should have been burned and renewed. But not a stroke of this inscription was ever cut, and now the young chestnut boughs droop into the uncovered interior, and shy forest-birds sing fearlessly among them, having learned that this house belongs to God, not man. As if to reassure them, and perhaps in allusion to his own vegetarian habits, the architect has spread some rough plaster at the head of the apartment and marked on it in bold characters, "Thou shalt not kill." Two slabs outside, a little way from the walls, bear these inscriptions, "Peace on Earth," "Good-Will to Men." When I visited it, the path was so obstructed with bushes, besides its steepness, that it was hard to comprehend how these various materials had been brought together; it seemed more like some strange architectural boulder that had drifted from some Runic period and been stranded there. It was as apt a confessional as any of Wordsworth's nooks among the Tro-sachs; and when one thinks how many men are wearing out their souls in trying to conform to the traditional mythologies of others, it seems nobler in this man to have reared upon that lonely hill the unfinished memorial of his own.

I recall another path which leads from the Lower Saranac Lake, near "Martin's," to what the guides call, or used to call, "The Philosopher's Camp" at Ampergand. On this oddly-named lake, in the Adirondack region, a tract of land was bought by Professor Agassiz and his friends, who made there a

summer camping-ground, and with one comrade I once sought the spot. I remember with what delight we left the boat,—so delightful at first, so fatiguing at last; for I cannot, with Mr. Murray, call it a merit in the Adirondacks that you never have to walk,—and stepped away into the free forest. We passed tangled swamps, so dense with upturned trees and trailing mosses that they seemed to give no opening for any living thing to pass, unless it might be some soft and silent owl that turned its head almost to dislocation in watching us, ere it flitted vaguely away. Farther on, the deep cool forest was luxurious with plummy ferns; we trod on moss-covered roots, finding the emerald steps so soft, we scarcely knew that we were ascending; every breath was aromatic; there seemed infinite healing in every fragrant drop that fell upon our necks from the cedar boughs. We had what I think the pleasantest guide for a daylight tramp,—one who has never before passed over that particular route, and can only pilot you on general principles till he gladly, at last, allows you to pilot him. When we once got the lead we took him jubilantly on, and beginning to look for "The Philosopher's Camp," found ourselves confronted by a large cedar-tree on the margin of a wooded lake. This was plainly the end of the path. Was the camp then afloat? Our escort was in that state of hopeless ignorance of which only lost guides are capable. We scanned the green horizon and the level water, without glimpse of human abode. It seemed an enchanted lake, and we looked about the tree-trunk for some fairy horn, that we might blow it. That failing, we tried three rifle-shots, and out from the shadow of an island, on the instant, there glided a boat which bore no lady of the lake, but a red-shirted woodsman. The artist whom we sought was on that very island, it seemed, sketching patiently while his guides were driving the deer.

This artist was he whose "Procession of the Pines" had identified his

fame with that delightful forest region, and whose description of its finest waterfall was published in this very magazine a dozen years ago. He it was who had laid out with artistic taste "The Philosopher's Camp," and who was that season still awaiting philosophers as well as deer. He had been there for a month, alone with the guides, and declared that Nature was pressing upon him to an extent that almost drove him wild. His eyes had a certain remote and questioning look that belongs to imaginative men who dwell alone. It seemed an impertinence to ask him to come out of his dream and offer us dinner; but his instincts of hospitality failed not, and the red-shirted guide was sent to the camp, which was, it seemed, on the other side of the lake, to prepare our meal, while we bathed. I am thus particular in speaking of the dinner, not only because such is the custom of travellers, but also because it was the occasion of an interlude which I shall never forget. As we were disrobing for our bath upon the lonely island, where the soft pale water almost lapped our feet, and the deep, wooded hills made a great amphitheatre for the lake, our host bethought himself of something neglected in his instructions.

"Ben!" vociferated he to the guide, now rapidly receding. Ben paused on his oars.

"Remember to bo-o-oil the venison, Ben," shouted the pensive artist, while all the slumbering echoes arose to applaud this culinary confidence.

"And, Ben!" he added, imploringly, "don't forget the dumplings!" Upon this, the loons, all down the lake, who had hitherto been silent, took up the strain with vehemence, hurling their wild laughter at the presumptuous mortal who thus dared to invade their solitudes with details as trivial as Mr. Pickwick's tomato-sauce. They repeated it over and over to each other, till ten square miles of loons must have heard the news, and all laughed together; never was there such an audience; they could not get

over it, and two hours after, when we had rowed over to the camp and dinner was served, this irreverent and invisible chorus kept bursting out, at all points of the compass, with scattered chuckles of delight over this extraordinary bill of fare. Justice compels me to add that the dumplings were made of Indian-meal, upon a receipt devised by our artist; the guests preferred the venison, but the host showed a fidelity to his invention that proved him to be indeed a dweller in an ideal world.

Another path that comes back to memory is the bare trail that we followed over the prairies of Nebraska, in 1856, when the Missouri River was held by roving bands from the Slave States, and Freedom had to seek an overland route into Kansas. All day and all night we rode between distant prairie-fires, pillars of evening light and of morning cloud, while sometimes the low grass would burn to the very edge of the trail, so that we had to hold our breath as we galloped through. Parties of armed Missourians were sometimes seen over the prairie swells, so that we had to mount guard at nightfall; Free-State emigrants, fleeing from persecution, continually met us; and we sometimes saw parties of wandering Sioux, or passed their great irregular huts and houses of worship. I remember one desolate prairie summit on which an Indian boy sat motionless on horse-back; his bare red legs clung closely to the white sides of his horse; a gorgeous sunset was unrolled behind him, and he might have seemed the last of his race, just departing for the hunting-grounds of the blest. More often the horizon showed no human outline; and the sun set cloudless, as behind ocean-waves, wavering and elongated into pear-shaped outlines. But I remember best the excitement that filled our breasts when we approached spots where the contest for a free soil had already been sealed with blood. In those days, as one went to Pennsylvania to study coal formations or to Lake Superior for copper, so one went to

Kansas for men. "Every footpath on this planet," said a rare thinker, "may lead to the door of a hero," and that trail into Kansas ended rightly at the tent-door of John Brown.

And later, who that knew them can forget the picket-paths that were worn throughout the Sea Islands of South Carolina, — paths that wound along the shores of creeks or through the depths of woods, where the great wild roses tossed their airy festoons above your head, and the brilliant lizards glanced across your track, and your horse's ears suddenly pointed forward and his pace grew uneasy as he snuffed the presence of something you could not see. At night you had often to ride from picket to picket in dense darkness, trusting to the horse to find his way, or sometimes dismounting to feel with your hands for the track, while the great Southern fireflies seemed to offer their floating lanterns for guidance, and the hoarse "Chuck-will's-widow" croaked ominously from the trees, and the great guns of the siege of Charleston throbbed more faintly than the drumming of a partridge, from far away. Those islands are everywhere so intersected by dikes and ledges and winding creeks as to form a natural military region, like La Vendée; and yet two plantations that are twenty miles asunder by the road will sometimes be united by a footpath which a negro can traverse in two hours. These tracks are limited in distance by the island formation, but they assume a greater importance as you penetrate the mainland; they then join great States instead of mere plantations, and if you ask whither one of them leads, you are told "To Alabama," or "To Tennessee."

Time would fail to tell of that wandering path which leads to the Mine Mountain near Brattleborough, where you climb the high peak at last, and perhaps see the showers come up the Connecticut till they patter on the leaves beneath you, and then, swerving, pass up the black ravine and leave you unwet. Or, of those among the White

Mountains, gorgeous with great red lilies which presently seem to take flight in a cloud of butterflies that match their tints; paths where the balsamic air caresses you in light breezes, and masses of alder-berries rise above the waving ferns. Or of the paths that lead beside many a little New England stream, whose bank is lost to sight in a smooth green slope of grape-vine: the lower shoots rest upon the quiet water, but the upper masses are crowned by a white wreath of alder-blossoms; — beside them grow great masses of wild roses, and the simultaneous blossoms and berries of the gaudy nightshade. Or of those winding tracks that lead here and there among the flat stones of peaceful old graveyards, so entwined with grass and flowers that every spray of sweet-brier seems to tell more of life than all the accumulated epitaphs of death.

And when the paths that we have personally traversed are exhausted, memory holds almost as clearly those which the poets have trodden for us, — those innumerable by-ways of Shakespeare, each more real than any high-road in England; or Chaucer's

"Little path I found
Of mintes full and fennell greene";

or Spenser's

"Pathes and alleies wide
With footing worne";

or the path of Browning's "Pippa"

"Down the hillside, up the glen,
Love me as I love!"

or the weary tracks by which "Little Nell" wandered; or the haunted way in Sydney Dobell's ballad,

"Ravelstone, Ravelstone,
The merry path that leads
Down the golden morning hills,
And through the silver meads";

or the few American paths that genius has yet idealized; that where Hawthorne's "David Swan" slept, or that which Thoreau found upon the banks of Walden Pond, or where Whittier parted with his childhood's playmate on Ramoth Hill. It is not heights, nor depths, nor spaces that make the

world worth living in ; for the fairest landscape needs still to be garlanded by the imagination, to become classic with noble deeds and romantic with dreams.

Go where we please in nature, we receive in proportion as we give. Ivo, the old Bishop of Chartres, wrote, that "neither the secret depth of woods nor

the tops of mountains make man blessed, if he has not with him solitude of mind, the sabbath of the heart, and tranquillity of conscience." There are many roads, but one termination ; and Plato says, in his " Republic," that the point where all paths meet is the soul's true resting-place and the journey's end.

Thomas Wentworth Higginson.

THE RETURN.

THE bright sea washed across her feet,
As it had done of yore ;
The well-remembered odors sweet
Came through her opened door.

Again the grass his ripened head
Bowed where her raiment swept ;
Again the fog-bell told of dread,
And all the landscape wept.

Again beside the woodland bars
She found the wilding rose,
With petals five and heart of stars, —
The flower our childhood knows.

And there, before that blossom small,
By its young face beguiled,
The woman saw her burden fall,
And stood a little child.

She knew no more the weight of love,
No more the weight of grief ;
So could the simple wild rose move,
And bring her heart relief.

She asked not where her love was gone,
Nor where her grief was fled,
But stood, as at the great white Throne,
Unmindful of things dead.

OLDTOWN FIRESIDE STORIES.

CAPTAIN KIDD'S MONEY.

ONE of our most favorite legendary resorts was the old barn.

Sam Lawson preferred it on many accounts. It was quiet and retired, that is to say, at such distance from his own house that he could not hear if Hepsy called ever so loudly, and farther off than it would be convenient for that industrious and painstaking woman to follow him. Then there was the soft fragrant cushion of hay, on which his length of limb could be easily bestowed.

Our barn had an upper loft with a swinging outer door that commanded a view of the old mill, the waterfall, and the distant windings of the river, with its grassy green banks, its graceful elm draperies, and its white flocks of water-lilies; and then on this Saturday afternoon we had Sam all to ourselves. It was a drowsy, dreamy October day, when the hens were lazily "crawl, crawling," in a soft, conversational undertone with each other, as they scratched and picked the hay-seed under the barn windows. Below in the barn black Cæsar sat quietly hatchelling flax, sometimes gurgling and giggling to himself with an overflow of that interior jollity with which he seemed to be always full. The African in New England was a curious contrast to everybody around him in the joy and satisfaction that he seemed to feel in the mere fact of being alive. Every white person was glad or sorry for some appreciable cause in the past, present, or future, which was capable of being definitely stated; but black Cæsar was in an eternal giggle and frizzle and simmer of enjoyment for which he could give no earthly reason: he was an "embodied joy," like Shelley's skylark.

"Jest hear him," said Sam Lawson looking pensively over the hay-mow

and strewing hayseed down on his wool. "How that are crittur seems to tickle and laugh all the while 'bout nothin'. Lordy massy, he don't seem never to consider that 'this life's a dream, an empty show.'"

"Look here, Sam," we broke in, anxious to cut short a threatened stream of morality, "you promised to tell us about Captain Kidd and how you dug for his money."

"Did I now? Wal, boys, that are history o' Kidd's is a warnin' to fellers. Why, Kidd had pious parents and Bible and sanctuary privileges when he was a boy, and yet come to be hanged. It's all in this 'ere song I'm a goin' to sing ye. Lordy massy, I wish I had my bass-viol now. — Cæsar," he said, calling down from his perch, "can't you strike the pitch o' 'Cap'n Kidd' on your fiddle?"

Cæsar's fiddle was never far from him. It was, in fact, tucked away in a nice little nook just over the manger, and he often caught an interval from his work to scrape a dancing-tune on it, keeping time with his heels, to our great delight.

A most wailing minor-keyed tune was doled forth, which seemed quite refreshing to Sam's pathetic vein, as he sang in his most lugubrious tones: —

"My name was Robert Kidd
As I sailed, as I sailed,
My name was Robert Kidd;
God's laws I did forbid,
And so wickedly I did,
As I sailed, as I sailed."

"Now ye see, boys, he's a goin' to tell how he abused his religious privileges; just hear now: —

"My father taught me well,
As I sailed, as I sailed;
My father taught me well,
To shun the gates of hell,
But yet I did rebel,
As I sailed, as I sailed."

"He put a Bible in my hand
As I sailed, as I sailed;

He put a Bible in my hand,
And I sunk it in the sand,
Before I left the strand,
As I sailed, as I sailed.'

"Did ye ever hear o' such a hardened, contrary crittur, boys? It's awful to think of. Wal, ye see that are's the way fellers allers begin the ways o' sin, by turnin' their back on the Bible and the advice o' pious parents. Now hear what he come to:—

"Then I murdered William More,
As I sailed, as I sailed;
I murdered William More,
And left him in his gore,
Not many leagues from shore,
As I sailed, as I sailed.

"To execution dock
I must go, I must go,
To execution dock,
While thousands round me flock,
To see me on the block,
I must go, I must go.'

"There was a good deal more on 't," said Sam, pausing, "but I don't seem to remember it; but it's real solemn and affectin'."

"Who was Captain Kidd, Sam?" said I.

"Wal, he was an officer in the British navy, and he got to being a pirate, used to take ships and sink 'em, and murder the folks; and so they say he got no end o' money; gold and silver and precious stones as many as the wise men in the East. But ye see, what good did it all do him? He couldn't use it and darsn't keep it, so he used to bury it in spots round here and there in the awfulest heathen way ye ever heard of. Why, they say he allers used to kill one or two men or women or children of his prisoners and bury with it, so that their sperits might keep watch on it ef anybody was to dig arter it. That are thing has been tried and tried and tried, but no man nor mother's son on 'em ever got a cent that dug. 'T was tried here 'n Oldtown, and they come pretty nigh gettin' on 't, but it gin 'em the slip. Ye see, boys, *it's the Devil's money*, and he holds a pretty tight grip on 't."

"Wal, how was it about digging for it? Tell us, did *you* do it? Were *you* there? Did *you* see it? And why could

n't they get it?" we both asked eagerly and in one breath.

"Why, Lordy massy, boys, your questions tumbles over each other thick as martins out o' a martin-box. Now you jist be moderate and let alone, and I'll tell you all about it from the beginnin' to the end. I did n't raily have no hand in 't, though I was knowin' to 't, as I be to most things that goes on round here, but my conscience would n't raily a let me start on no sich undertakin'.

"Wal, the one that fust sot the thing a goin' was old Mother Hokum, that used to live up in that little tumble-down shed by the cranberry-pond up beyond the spring pastur'. They had a putty bad name them Hokums. How they got a livin' nobody knew, for they did n't seem to pay no attention to raisin' nothin' but childun, but the deuce knows there was plenty o' them. Their old hut was like a rabbit-pen,—there was a tow head to every crack and cranny. 'Member what old Cæsar said once when the word come to the store that old Hokum had got twins. 'S'pose de Lord know best,' says Cæsar, 'but I thought dere was Hokums enough afore.' Wal, even poor workin' industrious folks like me finds it's hard gettin' along when there's so many mouths to feed. Lordy massy, there don't never seem to be no end on 't, and so it ain't wonderful, come to think on 't, ef folks like them Hokums gets tempted to help along in ways that ain't quite right. Anyhow folks did use to think that old Hokum was too sort o' familiar with their wood-piles 'long in the night, though they could n't never prove it on him; and when Mother Hokum come to houses round to wash, folks use sometimes to miss pieces, here and there, though they never could find 'em on her; then they was allers a gettin' in debt here and a gettin' in debt there. Why, they got to owin' two dollars to Joe Gidger for butcher's meat. Joe was sort o' good-natured and let 'em have meat, 'cause Hokum he promised so fair to pay, but he could n't never get it out o' him. 'Member once Joe walked clear

up to the cranberry-pond arter that are two dollars, but Mother Hokum she see him a comin' jist as he come past the juniper-bush on the corner. She says to Hokum, 'Get into bed, old man, quick, and let me tell the story,' says she. So she covered him up, and when Gidger come in she come up to him and says she, 'Why, Mr. Gidger, I'm jist ashamed to see ye; why Mr. Hokum was jist a comin' down to pay ye that are money last week, but ye see he was took down with the small-pox —' Joe did n't hear no more; he jist turned round and he streaked it out that are door with his coat-tails flyin' out straight ahind him, and old Mother Hokum she jist stood at the window holdin' her sides and laughin' fit to split to see him run. That are's jist a sample o' the ways them Hokums cut up.

"Wal, you see, boys, there's a queer kind o' rock down on the bank o' the river that looks sort o' like a grave-stone. The biggest part on't is sunk down underground, and it's pretty well growed over with blackberry-vines, but when you scratch the bushes away they used to make out some queer marks on that are rock. They was sort o' lines and crosses, and folks would have it that them was Kidd's private marks, and that there was one o' the places where he hid his money.

"Wal, there's no sayin' fairly how it come to be thought so, but fellers used to say so, and they used sometimes to talk it over up to the tahvern, and kind o' wonder whether or no if they should dig, they would n't come to suthin'.

"Wal, old Mother Hokum she heard on't, and she was a sort o' enterprisin' old crittur, — fact was she had to be, 'cause the young Hokums was jist like bag-worms, — the more they growed the more they eat, and I expect she found it pretty hard to fill their mouths; and so she said ef there *was* anything under that are rock, they'd as good's have it as the Devil; and so she did n't give old Hokum no peace o' his life but he must see what there was there.

"Wal, I was with 'em the night they was a talkin' on't up. Ye see Hokum

he got thirty-seven cents' worth o' lemons and some sperit. I see him goin' by as I was out a splittin' kindlin's, and says he, 'Sam, you jist go 'long up to our house to-night,' says he; 'Toddy Whitney and Harry Wiggin's comin' up, and we're goin' to have a little suthin' hot,' says he; and he kind o' showed me the lemons and sperit. And I told him I guessed I would go 'long. Wal, I kind o' wanted to see what they'd be up to, ye know.

"Wal, come to find out, they was a talkin' about Cap'n Kidd's treasures, and layin' out how they should get it, and a settin' one another on with gret stories about it.

"'I've heard that there was whole chists full o' gold guineas,' says one.

"'And I've heard o' gold bracelets and ear-rings and finger-rings all sparklin' with diamonds,' says another.

"'Maybe it's old silver plate from some o' them old West Indian grantees,' says another.

"'Wal, whatever it is,' says Mother Hokum, 'I want to be into it,' says she.

"'Wal, Sam, won't you jine?' says they.

"'Wal, boys,' says I, 'I kind o' don't feel jis like j'inin'. I sort o' ain't clear about the rights on't; seems to me it's mighty nigh like goin' to the Devil for money.'

"'Wal,' says Mother Hokum, 'what if 'tis? Money's money, get it how ye will; and the Devil's money'll buy as much meat as any. I'd go to the Devil, if he gave good money.'

"'Wal, I guess I would n't,' says I. 'Don't you 'member the sermon Parson Lothrop preached about hastin' to be rich, last Sabba' day?'

"'Parson Lothrop be hanged!' says she. 'Wal, now,' says she, 'I like to see a parson with his silk stockin's and great gold-headed cane, a lollopin' in his carriage behind his fat, prancin' hosses, comin' to meetin' to preach to us poor folks not to want to be rich! How'd he like it to have forty-'leven children, and nothin' to put onto 'em or into 'em, I wonder? Guess if Lady

Lothrop had to rub and scrub and wear her fingers to the bone as I do, she'd want to be rich; and I guess the Parson, if he could n't get a bellyful for a week, would be for diggin' up Kidd's money, or doing most anything else to make the pot bile.

"Wal,' says I, 'I'll kind o' go with ye, boys, and sort o' see how things turn out; but I guess I won't take no share in 't,' says I.

"Wal, they got it all planned out. They was to wait till the full moon, and then they was to get Primus King to go with 'em and help do the diggin'. Ye see Hokum and Toddy Whitney and Wiggin are all putty softly fellers, and hate dreffully to work, and I tell you the Kidd money ain't to be got without a pretty tough piece o' diggin'. Why, it's jist like diggin' a well to get at it. Now Primus King was the master hand for diggin' wells, and so they said they'd get him by givin' on him a share.

"Harry Wiggin he didn't want no nigger a sharin' in it, he said; but Toddy and Hokum they said that when there was such stiff diggin' to be done, they did n't care if they did go in with a nigger.

"Wal, Wiggin he said he had n't no objection to havin' the nigger do the diggin', it was *sharin' the profits* he objected to.

"Wal,' says Hokum, 'you can't get him without,' says he. 'Primus knows too much,' says he; 'you can't fool him.' Finally they 'greed that they was to give Primus twenty dollars, and share the treasure 'mong themselves.

"Come to talk with Primus he would n't stick in a spade, unless they'd pay him aforehand. Ye see Primus was up to 'em; he knowed about Gidger, and there wa' n't none on 'em that was particular good pay; and so they all jist hed to rake and scrape, and pay him down the twenty dollars among 'em; and they 'greed for the fust full moon, at twelve o'clock at night, the 9th of October.

"Wal, ye see I had to tell Hepsy I was goin' out to watch. Wal, so I was;

but not jist in the way she took it; but, Lordy massy, a feller has to tell his wife suthin' to keep her quiet, ye know, 'specially Hepsy.

"Wal, wal, of all the moonlight nights that ever I did see, I never did see one equal to that. Why, you could see the color o' everything. I'member I could see how the huckleberry-bushes on the rock was red as blood when the moonlight shone through 'em; 'cause the leaves, you see, had begun to turn.

"Goin' on our way we got to talkin' about the sperits.

"I ain't afraid of 'em,' says Hokum. 'What harm can a sperit do me?' says he. 'I don't care ef there's a dozen of 'em'; and he took a swig at his bottle.

"O, there ain't no sperits,' says Harry Wiggin. 'That are talk's all nonsense'; and he took a swig at *his* bottle.

"Wal,' says Toddy, 'I don't know 'bout that are. Me and Ike Sanders has seen the sperits in the Captain Brown house. We thought we'd jist have a peek into the window one night, and there was a whole flock o' black colts without no heads on come rushin' on us and knocked us flat.'

"I expect you'd been at the tah-vern,' said Hokum.

"Wal, yes, we had; but them was sperits; we wa' n't drunk, now; we was jist as sober as ever we was.'

"Wal, they won't get away my money,' says Primus, 'for I put it safe away in Dinah's teapot afore I come out'; and then he showed all his ivories from ear to ear. 'I think all this ere's sort o' foolishness,' says Primus.

"Wal,' says I, 'boys, I ain't a goin' to have no part or lot in this 'ere matter, but I'll jist lay it off to you how it's to be done. Ef Kidd's money is under this rock, there's *sperits* that watch it, and you must n't give 'em no advantage. There must n't be a word spoken from the time ye get sight o' the treasure till ye get it safe up on to firm ground,' says I. 'Ef ye do, it'll vanish right out o' sight. I've talked with them that has dug down to it and

seen it, but they allers lost it, 'cause they'd call out and say something; and the minute they spoke, away it went.'

"Wal, so they marked off the ground, and Primus he begun to dig, and the rest kind o' sot round. It was so still it was kind o' solemn. Ye see it was past twelve o'clock, and every crittur in Oldtown was asleep, and there was two whippoorwills on the great Cap'n Brown elm-trees, that kep' a answerin' each other back and forward sort o' solitary like; and then every once in a while there'd come a sort o' strange whisper up among the elm-tree leaves, jist as if there was talkin' goin' on; and every time Primus struck his spade into the ground it sounded sort o' holler, jist as if he'd been a diggin' a grave. 'It's kind o' malancholy,' says I, 'to think o' them poor critturs that had to be killed and buried jist to keep this 'ere treasure. What awful things 'll be brought to light in the judgment-day! Them poor critturs they loved to live and hated to die as much as any on us; but no, they hed to die jist to satisfy that crittur's wicked will. I've heard them as thought they could tell the Captain Kidd places by layin' their ear to the ground at midnight, and they'd hear groans and wailin's.'"

"Why, Sam! were there really people who could tell where Kidd's money was?" I here interposed.

"O, sartin; why yis. There was Shebna Bascom, he was one. Shebna could always tell what was under the earth. He'd cut a hazel stick and hold it in his hand when folks was wantin' to know where to dig wells, and that are stick would jist turn in his hand, and p'int down till it would fairly grind the bark off; and ef you dug in that place you was sure to find a spring. O yis, Shebna he's told many where the Kidd money was, and been with 'em when they dug for it; but the pester on 't was they allers lost it, 'cause they would some on 'em speak afore they thought."

"But, Sam, what about this digging? Let's know what came on 't," said we,

as Sam appeared to lose his way in his story.

"Wal, ye see, they dug down about five feet, when Primus he struck his spade smack on something that chinked like iron.

"Wal, then Hokum and Toddy Whitney was into the hole in a minute; they made Primus get out, and they took the spade, 'cause they wanted to be sure to come on it themselves.

"Wal, they begun, and they dug and he scraped, and sure enough they come to a gret iron pot as big as your granny's dinner-pot, with an iron bale to it.

"Wal, then they put down a rope, and he put the rope through the handle; then Hokum and Toddy they clambered up on the bank, and all on 'em began to draw up jist as still and silent as could be. They drawed and they drawed, till they jist got it even with the ground, when Toddy spoke out all in a tremble. 'There,' says he, '*we've got it!*' And the minit he spoke they was both struck by *suthin'* that knocked 'em clean over; and the rope give a crack like a pistol-shot, and broke short off, and the pot went down, down, down, and they heard it goin', jink, jink, jink; and it went way down into the earth, and the ground closed over it; and then they heard the screechiness laugh ye ever did hear."

"I want to know, Sam, did you see that pot?" I exclaimed at this part of the story.

"Wal, no, I did n't. Ye see I jist happened to drop asleep while they was diggin', I was so kind o' tired, and I did n't wake up till it was all over."

"I was waked up, 'cause there was consid'able of a scuffle; for Hokum was so mad at Toddy for speakin', that he was a fistin' on him; and old Primus he jist hawhawed and laughed. 'Wal, I got *my* money safe, anyhow,' says he.

"Wal, come to," says I. "'T ain't no use cryin' for spilt milk; you've jist got to turn in now and fill up this 'ere hole, else the selectmen 'll be down on ye.'

"Wal," says Primus, 'I did n't en-

gage to fill up no holes'; and he put his spade on his shoulder and trudged off.

"Wal, it was putty hard work, fillin' in that hole; but Hokum and Toddy and Wiggin had to do it, 'cause they did n't want to have everybody a laughin' at 'em; and I kind o' tried to set it home to 'em, showin' on 'em that 't was all for the best.

"Ef you'd a been left to get that are money, there'd a come a cuss with

it,' says I. 'It shows the vanity o' hastin' to be rich.'

"O you shet up,' says Hokum, says he; 'you never hasted to anything,' says he. Ye see he was riled, that's why he spoke so."

"Sam," said we, after maturely reflecting over the story, "what do you suppose was in that pot?"

"Lordy massy, boys, ye never will be done askin' questions. Why, how should I know?"

Harriet Beecher Stowe.

HIGHLY EXPLOSIVE.

"I SHALL not appear at breakfast to-morrow morning, I shall be gone a-Maying," announced Miselle, as she took her bedroom candlestick in hand. Caleb looked mildly up from the "Bride of Lammermoor," and the study of his illustrious prototype.

"Very well, my dear," said he, "it is as harmless a vagary as could be expected. You will only spoil your clothes, and take cold in your head. Good night."

"'T was in the early twilight, ere yet the dew was hoar,

I went plucking purple pansies,'"

hummed Miselle going up stairs, and Caleb once more raised his eyes to ejaculate:—

"The wonderful power of alliteration properly applied! Nothing but the three *p*'s in that last line could have prevailed upon so indolent a mortal as you, Miselle, to leave a comfortable bed and a good breakfast for the sake of dragging your skirts and —"

But the rest of the apostrophe was lost in the depths of "The Bride," while Miselle, her candlestick, and her idea, pursued their upward journey.

The purple pansies proved few and far between, and their places were somewhat shabbily filled by houstonia, saxifrage, catkins, and twigs of aronia. To gather these Miselle trav-

elled over miles of dewy upland and moist marsh, forded brooks, climbed fences, wet her feet, dragged her skirts, tore her dress, and finally, utterly bewildered and lost, emerged from the woods at the junction of two unknown roads, and there stood forlorn while the catbirds mockingly mewed in her face, and saucy robins dressed their plump red breasts with a maddening suggestion of a plentiful breakfast.

The light roll of wheels, the deliberate patter of four-miles-to-the-hour horse-shoes, and the gentle creaking of chaise-springs, heralded an arrival, and Miselle, disposing her draperies, her broken hat, and her purple pansies, as decently as possible, prepared herself to arrest the traveller whoever he might be, and demand of him, not his purse or his life, but, *à la Sphinx*, an answer to her questioning.

The nodding chaise-top rose above the alder-bushes, then came the rotund and contemplative horse, and finally appeared the sedate face of the Treasurer, who, at sight of the forlorn figure awaiting him, drew rein, gave salutation, and, in reply to the demand promptly fired at him, made reply.

"The way home? why, you are so far out of it, that it is hard giving any direction. You must have crossed right through the Walden woods, and

the best thing you can do is to get into the chaise here, and I will take you back a little way and set you on the straight road. I'd go all the way, but I have to be at the mills a little early this morning, because —"

"Thank you very much, and I accept with pleasure," interposed Miselle, her impatient eyes fixed upon the deep-cushioned seat beside the Treasurer, and a sense of unutterable weariness suddenly overpowering her.

"Been out after flowers?" inquired her companion, in a tone of good-natured tolerance, as the chaise whirled upon its heel and began to jog steadily back in the direction whence it came.

"Yes, but I did n't find a great many, you see."

"Hardly enough to pay for the work, though I don't know but that is the amusing part of the business; I don't get much time for going Maying myself, and when I do —"

"Good morning, Mr. Treasurer; fine day for the season; got your crops in yet?"

And the speaker, a sturdy, brown fellow, clothed upon with a farmer's honest independence and blue frock, turned the cart in which he was carrying his plough afield a little to one side, and halted his Juno-eyed and sweet-breathed steers.

"Well, no," replied Mr. Treasurer, slowly; "we've had a good deal to do up at the mills."

"Got into trouble there the other day, did n't you?" interposed Agricola, a little mysteriously.

"Yes, had a mill go up and one hand blown," replied the Treasurer, calmly. "But that's all put to rights now, and we're running full force —"

At this instant a green and golden fly, lovely to behold, and spiteful and dangerous as some other lovely creations, settled upon Dobbin's nose, and bit it so viciously and so deeply that he with an angry neigh tossed up his head, swished his tail, and set forth upon his journey again in an impulsive and unchastened manner very foreign to his usual habits. Order was how-

ever presently restored, and in its first moments Miselle resumed her rôle of Sphinx.

"What was that you told the man about having a mill go up, and one of your hands blown off?" inquired she, looking at the Treasurer's two shapely and apparently comfortable upper extremities.

"O, not one of my own hands," replied he, smiling. "But you know our powder-mills are just up here in Acton, and one of them exploded the other day, and the man who had it in charge was injured."

"Dear me, and that's the way you talk about it," exclaimed Miselle, opening her eyes.

The Treasurer smiled again. "Why, yes, every business has its own phraseology, you know, and that's the way powder-men talk. You never hear of explosions and casualties and fatal accidents among them."

"I suppose where there is a consciousness of so much danger, they like to disguise the mention of it as much as possible," said Miselle, thoughtfully; and then eagerly, "But were you going to the powder-mills, just now, Mr. Treasurer?"

"Yes. That's the reason I did not offer to carry your home."

"O, I wish instead you would carry me there!"

"What, to the powder-mills?"

"Yes. I should of all things like to see a powder-mill!"

"Indeed! I shall be very happy to take you there if you really wish to go, but —" And the Treasurer looked dubiously at Miselle's forlorn raiment. She blushed to the roots of her hair, fearing that she was not considered presentable, even to a powder-mill.

"But I am afraid you will spoil your clothes. It is a very dirty place," resumed the Treasurer, so evidently in good faith that Miselle laughed aloud.

"They cannot be more spoiled than they are," said she. "So if that's all —"

"And you are not afraid?"

"O no. My eyes are not as bright as the Countess of Salisbury's, and on the

ball-in-the-same-shot-hole principle the mills must be unusually safe just now."

The Treasurer looked as if he did not quite follow this process of reasoning, but said something polite, and turned his horse in the direction of the mills. Presently appeared long rows of willows, lovely in the rosy flush of their spring raiment, and seeming the embodiment of pastoral peace and serenity. Mr. Treasurer waved his whip toward them.

"We cultivate these willows for charcoal," said he. "Every few years they are trimmed down, and the branches cut into suitable lengths, and peeled and distilled into charcoal."

"Distilled into charcoal?" repeated Miselle, curiously.

"Yes," replied the Treasurer; "and I will show you what I mean, instead of saying it, for here we are."

And the Treasurer, checking Dobbin at the entrance of a shed with a rack and manger at the farther end, while he took Miselle out of the chaise, drove in and made fast that amiable steed, and returning, led the way to a small building with a huge wood-house beyond it and a wood-pile nearly as large at the back.

"All that," said the Treasurer, pointing to the formidable deposit, "is destined to be burned into charcoal, and blazed away in gunpowder. It is partly willow and partly maple, a wood of which we use a good deal. It is all peeled or barked, cut into lengths as you see here in the pile, and then carried to the retorts in this building."

And the Treasurer, closely followed by Miselle, led the way into a black and grimy building occupied at the one side by several bins filled with charcoal, and at the other by a large brick furnace, within which were enclosed four horizontal cylindrical cast-iron retorts, arranged precisely upon the plan of an old-fashioned brick oven, with a door at one end and a flue for the escape of steam and gases at the other. Into these cylinders the wood is carefully packed, the larger pieces around the outside, while the smaller ones fill

the interior, that all may receive an equal "bake." The door is then closed, and the crevice about it "luted" with clay, so as to render it air-tight. A fire is then made underneath, the flames extending quite around the retort and heating every part equally but not fiercely. This fire is kept up for twenty-four hours, when it is suffered to die down; and the retorts stand unopened for twenty-four hours longer, when the charcoal is cooled and ready for use.

"Here is a specimen," said the Treasurer, taking up a stick from one of the bins and breaking it in two. The grain of the wood was perfect, the charring complete, and the color a glossy and velvety black, extremely beautiful in its way.

"Touch it; it will not soil your finger or your handkerchief," said the Treasurer; and Miselle, laying a finger upon the fractured end, found that it received no stain.

"But what becomes of all the moisture of the wood, that would be smoke if the willow were burned in the open air?" asked she, as her guide led the way toward the door.

"Come round this way, and you shall see," said he, smiling, and showed at the back of the building a row of four horizontal pipes all emitting steam, smoke, and a black liquid deposit which dripped into barrels set to receive it.

"It is early in the day yet, but by night the air will be dense with this peculiar smoke which you may already both smell and see."

"It smells like an air-tight stove too closely shut up," said Miselle, sniffing discontentedly.

"Yes. In an air-tight stove you convert wood into charcoal, tar, and pyroligneous acid, which latter products become gradually stored away in the funnel and chimney of your stove, and ultimately destroy them. We, on the other hand, only conserve the charcoal, and draw off the useless material in this fashion."

"Useless?"

"Well, yes, to us, although very

useful to those who wish for it. In England the tar, mixed with spirits of wine, makes a fine black lacquer, and the pyroligneous acid, chemically treated, becomes excellent wine vinegar."

"Is it possible?"

"Quite. Let us be thankful that we live among apple-orchards, and that the product of these retorts is never used as food for man."

Miselle was watching a man, black as the brother Grimms' charcoal-burners, wheeling a large barrow of the charred willow branches out of the house and toward another building. "What is he going to do with it?" asked she.

"It is going to the pulverizing-house, where it makes its first step toward gunpowder. Shall we follow?" replied the Treasurer, good-naturedly. Miselle was already following, and presently stood in front of a series of long and somewhat slender barrels, revolving horizontally at a moderate speed, but with a deafening noise. Upon the floor lay a half-emptied bag of bright gold-colored sulphur, and beside it stood the barrow of charcoal.

"These two ingredients," shouted the Treasurer, pointing toward them, "carefully weighed in the proper proportions —"

"What proportions?" shrieked Miselle.

"Charcoal fifteen, sulphur ten, the remaining seventy-five saltpetre, with which we have not yet meddled," replied the Treasurer. "The sulphur and charcoal there are placed in these barrels in company with one hundred and fifty pounds of iron balls to each barrel, the barrels being fitted with interior ledges which aid the pulverizing process desired. The barrel is then set in motion as you see, and the motion continued from twenty-four to forty-eight hours, according to the quality of powder desired. It comes out in this form." And the Treasurer lifted the cover from a wooden tub or firkin, half full of a grayish-black substance, as fine as the dust upon a sunny coun-

try road in August, and soft as down to the touch.

"There is no harm in it yet," said the Treasurer, as Miselle gingerly touched the tip of her finger to the mass. "And now I will show you the saltpetre, which, after all, is the gunpowder, for the charcoal is only used to make it burn, and the sulphur to keep it in order and render it a little more reliable."

The Treasurer opened the door of a building upon a side hill, and showed it filled with coarse brown sacks, conveying an indescribable suggestion of travel and the sea, so that Miselle's first question was, "Where did they come from?"

"Calcutta. Very little saltpetre is brought from anywhere else," said the Treasurer, cutting open a bag and taking up a handful of the semi-transparent crystals. "And this is an unusually good article, as you may see for yourself, — very white, and very clean; first-rate saltpetre, I call it."

"What is the price?" asked Miselle, looking respectfully at the saltpetre, and trying to remember how many miles it is from Calcutta to Boston by the way of the Cape of Good Hope.

"Eleven cents, and the sulphur is worth four cents, and the coal from two to five, so you may estimate the price of a pound of gunpowder exclusive of labor, for these are all the ingredients. But now, come round here." And at the side of the building, which was also the side of the hill, the Treasurer showed a wooden tramway with a hand-car which could be pushed under a trap in the floor of the storehouse, and thus easily loaded, without the exertion of raising the bags, which are immensely heavy in proportion to their bulk. From beneath the storehouse the tramway led to a door in the side of a building considerably lower down the hill, toward which the Treasurer now led the way.

Entering a large room filled with steam, men, pans, and piles, all more or less white and efflorescent, the first object prominently presenting itself was

a huge boiler, almost resting upon the floor, and reaching so far toward the roof that, like the great Heidelberg Tun, it was approached by a flight of steps leading to a platform, which extended behind it as far as the door in the side of the building previously noticed. This door was now opened to admit a car of saltpetre, which was trundled directly to the edge of the vat. Miselle, courteously invited to mount the steps, was at the top presented to an intelligent-looking man, who with a long skimmer in his hand stood gravely watching the ebullition of a milky-looking mass which nearly filled the caldron, and seethed and bubbled in a desperate and somewhat startling manner.

"Almost ready to draw off, is n't it?" asked the Treasurer, also regarding this singular-looking broth attentively.

"Yes, sir, pretty near," replied the man, taking a small glass tube from a shelf above his head, and dropping it into the boiling mass, where it stood upright like a buoy.

"What is that?" asked Miselle, admiringly.

"A spirit-glass," said the Treasurer, taking it up and showing her the degrees marked upon it. "o you see represents the resistance of water to the air enclosed in this tube, and 45° the density of saltpetre in solution fit for our purpose. This solution is very nearly at that point, and in the moment we must wait before seeing it drawn off allow me to inquire whether you have ever dabbled in chemistry at all?"

"Hardly; indeed, for all practical purposes, not at all," replied Miselle, meekly, and the Treasurer proceeded.

"Then perhaps you do not know that every salt crystallizes uniformly in its own peculiar shape, and under its own peculiar circumstances, so that in fact we do not purify or refine this nitre or saltpetre, for it is impossible that it should in a natural condition be other than simply itself, that is perfect; what we may do is to induce the conditions under which it becomes disentangled from other substances and is made

available for manufacture. For instance, nitre is more soluble in water at the boiling-point than in cold water, but muriate of soda is not; consequently when we draw off this nitre solution at a high temperature, the muriate of soda sinks to the bottom and is left behind in substance. On the other hand, nitrate of lime, muriate of lime, and some other salts are more soluble in cold water than in hot, consequently when the boiling liquor cools the nitre crystallizes, and the others are left dissolved in the mother-water of crystallization. And thus, as I say, Nature does the work, and we are but her humble agents. One thing more, and then we shall see the drawing off. The boiling of this vat without a fire, — what do you make of it?"

"Steam," replied Miselle, in a "glittering generality."

"Yes," replied the Treasurer. "A perforated steam-pipe is introduced into this kettle and coiled round its sides, and when the workman moves this brake and lets on the steam, it rises through the contents of the kettle to the surface and produces the ebullition which you perceive."

"And is that really boiling, and just as good as having a fire underneath in the old-fashioned way?"

"Of course. You raise the solution to the boiling-point, and what difference does it make whether by fire or steam or dropping red-hot stones into it? In old times, and not so very old either, we had a fire under each kettle in this refinery, but now our good servant steam does that and a great deal more for us with an infinite saving of time, labor, and consequently money."

"Well, he is a good servant, but not picturesque. How much does this great kettle hold?"

"Six hundred gallons. There you see we have a smaller one, not in use just now."

"I see. And is there nothing in this but saltpetre and water?"

"Only a little gluc, which acts mechanically in consolidating the scum and making it easy to remove. You see

that the solution is now perfectly clear, the spirit-glass stands at 45°, and our friend shuts off the steam and allows the liquid to become quiescent, that the insoluble salts may settle; and in drawing off, he takes care not to disturb them."

At this juncture the workman seized the open end of a pipe projecting a few inches above the liquid, and bent it backward to about the same distance below the surface. "That is a jointed pipe," explained the Treasurer. "And by throwing it back in that way he opens it and allows his solution to run off, drawing always from the surface. Step down, if you please, and you will see."

Miselle stepped down, and she saw that the other end of the pipe came through the side of the kettle near the bottom, and that it led into a wooden trough or gutter, which conducted the boiling liquid to the remotest of three large shallow wooden vats. Here stood a workman awaiting it with an implement like a very broad hoe in his hand; and as soon as the solution covered the bottom of the vat, he began to stir it backward and forward with a deliberate motion, implying that he intended continuing the work for a long while.

"The trough is a cooler, and the instrument a cooling-iron," explained the Treasurer. "And the purpose of the agitation is to prevent the nitre from crystallizing in large crystals, as it would if left to itself."

"What harm would that do?"

"It would necessitate a crushing process before the nitre could be used in powder. By constant agitation it may be induced to crystallize in this manner."

And the Treasurer led the way to a large box or trough elevated upon a frame, and heaped full of snow-white and sparkling crystals like coarse sand, or the grade of salt known in the shops as coarse-fine.

"This is the saltpetre as taken from the cooler," said the Treasurer, "and it is placed in this trough to be rinsed. A quantity of pure cold water is poured

over it and filters slowly through the mass to the bottom, where it escapes as you see." And he pointed to a shallow trough below the rinsing-vat into which the liquid slowly dripped through holes around the base of the upper one. This lower trough was already nearly full of a yellowish liquid, and all around its sides the saltpetre had crystallized in beautiful clear spears like icicles, covered with a lovely little frost-work like bloom on a grape. The Treasurer took up one carefully and brushed away the rime.

"See," said he, "how regular and beautiful is the shape of the crystal, and every one alike, and all so different from any other crystal. I wonder every lady does not study chemistry, it is such a beautiful science."

"I guess I've got to disturb you a little with this hose," said an apologetic voice; and between Miselle and the crystal appeared a hand holding the end of a black hose, which it deposited in the vat, whose contents immediately began to disappear. The Treasurer looked round.

"They are pumping off this vat," said he. "The liquid residuum from every process in refining saltpetre is saved, and worked over and over until neither water nor nitre remains with the insoluble waste; although, in fact, there is no waste at all, for the deposit remaining after all the nitre is extracted is one of the most valuable manures in existence, as you will confess when I show you our grass-land. Meantime, let us follow this hose, and see the next process."

The hose being followed, led first to a steam-pump, and then to one of a series of large shallow pans, "jacketed," as the Treasurer explained, with an exterior iron skin, between which and the interior one was left a space for the passage of steam, which, being presently applied, caused the contents of the pan to boil and bubble in a merry and highly evaporative style.

"And so we keep on, you see," said the Treasurer. "Boiling down, evaporating, crystallizing, over and over, un-

til every particle of saltpetre is extracted, cleansed, and thoroughly dried, which last process is effected by placing it in the jacketed pans, without any water, letting on the steam, and stirring the nitre gently until it is perfectly free from moisture. This is essential to accuracy in weighing. And now, I believe, we have seen everything here, and, having our three ingredients prepared, can go on to the combining them, thus entering upon the dangerous part of our journey. Do you feel inclined to stop here, and take the rest upon hearsay?"

"O no; I am not at all timid," serenely replied Miselle; and with a little scream and a spasmodic contraction of the muscles, she nimbly jumped aside and ran back a little way, to escape a ferocious wasp who insisted upon flying into her eyes and mouth.

"Here," resumed the Treasurer, pausing at the door of a little building, "are the boilers which supply the refinery with steam, and serve several other purposes beside. Among the rest it is led into the wash-house, where the men, by turning a stop-cock, can force enough into a pail of water in one minute to make it too warm for use."

"I should think bathing would be rather a hopeless task for a powder-man," said Miselle, looking at a fine specimen of animated ebony with Caucasian features, who just then passed the boiler-house.

"Not at all," replied the Treasurer, a little indignantly. "There is not a cleaner set of artisans in the country than powder-makers; for not only their comfort but their safety demands that every particle of powder should be removed, both from their persons and their clothes, before running the chances of ordinary life at home; and every man among them takes a thorough bath, and changes every article of clothing, before leaving the mills at night. Their working-clothes never leave this place at all, and their home-clothes never come any farther than the wash-house.

"And now we come to the mill, where for the first time we have our three in-

gredients combined in the shape of powder. Good morning, Malthouse"; and the Treasurer nodded good-humoredly to a grave and reserved workman who came forward to meet him.

"Mr. Malthouse has charge of the mill we are about to inspect," hastily explained the Treasurer. "He is an Englishman, and an hereditary member of the powder-guild, for his grandfather died of old age in the business, and his father was killed by an explosion while at work; but the son was not frightened out of the trade, you see. Where, in America, will you find three generations constant to one occupation?"

"Either the grandfather or the grandson would have been a millionaire with us," suggested Miselle, smiling; and Mr. Malthouse, unlocking the door of a small building, showed a number of tubs carefully covered, some containing pure white saltpetre in powder, and some the gray-black mixture of sulphur and charcoal she had seen in the pulverizing-house.

"We put in two of each of these tubs for a charge," said Malthouse, curtly. "It is all weighed when it comes to me, and one hundred and fifty pounds is a charge. To that I put a gallon or so of water, and set the wheels going. It takes from two and a half to eight hours to finish a charge, according to the quality of the powder, and the weather."

"Why the weather?" interrupted Miselle.

"In damp weather it takes longer to dry the powder than in hot, dry weather," replied the man, briefly. "And if it is left ten minutes or so longer than long enough, the mill goes up."

"Why?" again demanded Miselle.

"Because the powder gets dry and light, and the rollers, instead of traveling over it as they should, push it along in front of them, and part of it rises in dust and flies over the edge of the bed, and at last the iron roller strikes the iron bed, and the next minute there's a noise.

"That was the way that man got

killed last week," said the Treasurer, softly. "He left the mill to go home to his dinner; it ought to have been stopped at 2.30; he got back at 2.50, looked in and saw a cloud of dust flying out of the bed, but all the same rushed in and had his hand on the wheel to stop the works, when the flash came. He staggered out of the ruins on his own feet, but it was the last turn they ever did for him. His head, face, feet, and legs were all scorched, but the worst of all was his clothes being filled with powder and igniting. They cut them off as fast as they could, but—"

Miselle leaned against the side of the door, and Malthouse quietly said: "It will be time to draw the charge in twenty minutes; you'd better take a look at it now, and leave before the dangerous time gets any nearer."

"You can just glance in, you know, and then I can tell you all about it as we go on, for this is really the only dangerous point in the whole process, — at least in our experience," said the Treasurer, considerably.

"I am not at all afraid," replied Miselle, smiling with white lips. "I was thinking of that poor man in his burning clothes; but Mr. Malthouse does not permit such accidents." With which piteous little sop to Fate and her present minister, she followed her two companions into the mill, and stood beside a great annular iron basin, about eighteen inches in depth, within whose circumference rolled with slow and ponderous motion two immense iron cylinders, strong, silent, and resistless as fate; beneath them lay a bed of black powder about an inch in thickness; and beside them, close to the inner and outer walls of the bed, travelled two wooden ploughshares, which continually threw this powder from the edges toward the middle, thus counteracting the tendency of the ponderous rollers to push it away from their track, and reach the iron bed whose contact meant death to any that stood near them at the moment. All powerful machinery induces a sentiment of awe in the mind

of the beholder; but Miselle, at least, never found any industrial device of man so awful to contemplate as these two immense cylinders travelling round and round their iron bed, and crushing beneath their tread that which might be the death of a thousand men. Fascinated beyond all terror, she stood watching them for many minutes, until she was aroused by seeing the workman plunge into the iron basin, apparently with the purpose of offering himself up a victim to this juggernaut whom he had served so long. But just as the great wheel grazed his head he drew it back, waited an instant, then dived again, and this time brought out with him a piece of black, moist paste, which he broke in his hand, critically examined, then showed to Miselle.

"That we call mill-cake," said he. "And when the charge is ready to draw, this will be all ground up into fine dust; that's the time to stop the mill."

"How much longer has this charge to run?" asked the Treasurer, suddenly.

"About ten minutes."

"Just time for you to take a look at the water-wheel underneath and the foundations of the building," said the Treasurer, turning to Miselle. "They are hewn out of the solid rock; and there are mighty few buildings in this Commonwealth that stand as firmly as this powder-mill."

"I thought all your buildings were very slight and cheap," replied Miselle, following him out of the house and down a grassy slope at the side. The Treasurer looked disgusted.

"So everybody thinks, who has not looked into the matter," said he. "But is it a reasonable theory? Those two cylinders up there weigh seven tons apiece, and the bed in which they roll weighs five tons, and it is highly important to the proper operations of the mill that the whole should stand true and firm. Now *can* you support nineteen tons of metal in constant motion upon a card house?"

Miselle thought not; and the Treasurer continued: "No, the foundations and the framework of these buildings are as solid as stone and iron and wood can be put together, and about as expensive too. The covering in, the boarding, and the roof are slight, I grant you; just a shelter from the weather, in fact, and but little more, and in case of an explosion you see the benefit of this plan; the side of the building blows off, or the roof blows up, and the damage is a matter of a few dollars and a few hours' labor, for the whole force of the blast has spent itself in that direction, and the framework and the machinery are uninjured. The great loss in an explosion is not of property, but of time, you see."

"And of life," suggested Miselle.

"Yes, but a man's danger is in his own hands pretty much in this business. Care, common sense, and application diminish the risk to almost nothing."

Just then Miselle reached the foot of the grassy slope, and looked beneath the mill into a lovely grotto full of green shimmering lights, and the splash of water, and the cool, moist air peculiar to such abodes. A plank, supported a few inches above the eddying pool, gave access to the place, and Miselle walked along it until she stood in the depth of the rock-chamber just above the two turbine water-wheels which had been stopped to admit her approach, and now at her request was set in motion. Standing there, with the gleaming, frolicsome water at her feet, the walls of dripping rock about her, and that awful possibility close overhead, Miselle spent a few memorable moments, then returned before she should be summoned, not that she was weary or terrified, but lest her lingering should appear a vaunt, and terrify the Treasurer with the belief that he had entertained one of the "strong-minded" unawares. His first remark confirmed her apprehension.

"You can say now that you have been where no woman ever was before,

and where you would not find many women willing to go; although for that matter, if the mill is to explode, it makes no difference where you may be, if it is within range of the explosion; and if it does not, why, you are as safe under it as inside of it. But the ten minutes are out; shall we go up and see the charge drawn?"

"By all means." And mounting the slope the Treasurer and his companion entered the mill again just as Malt-house, after a hasty glance into the bed where now the mill-cake was fast becoming mere dust and powder, went to a brake in one corner of the mill, turned it, and stopped the works. Next he wheeled a large, light barrow close to the bed, and with a wooden shovel lightly and rapidly transferred the charge from the one to the other, leaving only that small quantity which remained beneath the now motionless cylinders.

"I suppose it would not do to start the wheels on for a few inches, so as to get out the rest of the powder," suggested Miselle.

"How far would they travel, Malt-house?" asked the Treasurer, with a smile.

"Maybe one foot, but not two," replied the man, without looking up.

"And then?" asked Miselle, for the sake of his answer.

"We three would be out of this world anyway."

"After the new charge is in," explained the Treasurer, "the clinkers, as we call them, are dug up by the operator by means of his wooden shovel, and either removed or ground right up with the rest. It does not answer to use anything but wood for that purpose, however."

"One feller got blowed knocking clinkers off with a copper hammer," interposed Malt-house, rolling his barrow out of the mill and exchanging it with a comrade for an empty one, with which he went toward the little storehouse, and presently returned with a load of four tubs, two of saltpetre and two of mixed charcoal and sulphur, the whole

weighing, as before stated, one hundred and fifty pounds. Setting down the barrow, he next brought a watering-pot and sprinkled the contents over the bed of the basin. Then with quick, lithe motions he emptied two of his tubs into one side of the basin, and the other two into the other side, distributed the contents with his shovel, then turned the brake and set the great cylinders in motion again.

"He is in a hurry to get the works started before they cool off at all," said the Treasurer. "A certain degree of heat is essential to the working of the powder, and when, as sometimes happens, we let a mill stand still over night, it takes a good deal longer to perfect the next charge. Generally they run night and day, right along."

"But how about lights?" asked Miselle.

"They are on the outside of the building and shine in. Then if the workman wants to judge of the condition of his charge he takes a piece of mill-cake close to the glass and examines it, and sometimes he saves a piece in the daytime that he knows to be right, and compares it by lamplight with his new work. Experience and necessity suggest a good many ways of getting over all such difficulties."

"How does the mill-cake look when it is 'right'?"

"It should be of exceedingly close texture, of a uniform dark-gray color, and free from glittering particles of sulphur or specks of any sort; then there is a certain liveliness in the composition during its last stage, inducing it to attempt to escape like quicksilver from beneath the cylinders, which is very apparent to an experienced workman, and indicates the perfection and end of this process. But the time required to effect this end varies, as I before stated, with the various qualities of powder, and with the weather; and the whole process is essentially varied in different localities. At Waltham Abbey in England, for instance, the charge is only forty-two pounds, and it is worked on an average for three

hours under wheels of gray limestone six feet in diameter, and weighing about three tons each. The bed-stone is of the same kind, and the English writers upon this manufacture consider stone the best material, although gun-metal is used in the English mills at Madras, which, you know, is one of the great powder centres; they complain that the metal beds lose their horizontal position, and that the cylinders become worn and unequal. But if I once go into the minutiae of English and Indian powder-making, we shall never get through our own; and if you have interest enough in the subject to read half a dozen books, most of which I can lend you, you will get the whole much better than I can tell it to you.

"The next point in our tour is the press-house, which the barrow of mill-cake we just saw wheeled away has already reached. Let us follow it."

Passing another mill-house, where two more sets of cylinders were hard at work, the visitors came to a high and strongly built boarding, some twelve feet in height and twenty in length. A small doorway allowed passage to the raised plank walk connecting the different buildings, and showed a vista of trees, and grass, and running water, and a shadowy hillside flecked with sunshine, as full of sylvan loveliness and calm as though the little buildings dotted here and there were devoted to the manufactures of "gospels of peace" and universal brotherhood.

"What a lovely spot!" exclaimed Miselle, pausing in the doorway.

"Yes," replied the Treasurer. "It is pretty, although our establishment at Barre is much more so. Both of them are paradises for the squirrels, birds, etc., for of course no guns ever come within reach of them, and there are never many people about. As for the occasional explosions, they neither dread nor remember them, and they don't mind the smell of gunpowder. Then there are plenty of trees and running water, as you see."

"Were the trees planted for ornament?"

"Well, not exactly. They are additional barricades between the buildings in case of an explosion, and prevent the fire communicating from one to another."

"Are these wooden barriers for the same purpose, then?"

"Yes, they are called barricades, and the splinters and sparks flying from the exploding building are pretty certain to be caught either by these or the tree-tops, although with all the precautions possible the buildings will sometimes sympathize in some unaccountable manner. I have known seven to explode, one after another, with no visible communication."

So chatting, the Treasurer and Miselle strolled along the plank walk, with the canal at one hand and the brook made by the waste water of the mill babbling and sparkling at the other, and the trees arching above their heads as if they grew only for their own beauty, and not to be torn and scorched with gunpowder, on to the next building in the series, called the press-house. Here stood the barrow of mill-cake just arrived, with a silent and grave-looking workman feeding it into a crushing-machine, to reduce it to a convenient shape and size for his purpose. This done, he proceeded to make it into sandwiches, thus:—

He takes a copper sheet about two feet square; a piece of canvas of the same size; a quantity of powder about an inch in depth, shaped and measured by a wooden frame laid upon the canvas and lightly removed as soon as its use is fulfilled; then another canvas, and another copper; and the whole process is repeated, until a pile of powder sandwiches at least three feet in height is produced, when the operator, finishing with a copper sheet, pushes the frame upon which this pile rests carefully along a pair of wooden ways until it stands directly beneath the screw of a powerful hydrostatic press, which is then set in motion, and so continues until the resistance of the mass beneath the screw exceeds the power brought to bear upon it, when the press becomes

motionless; in a few moments, however, the settling of the powder slightly relieves the pressure, when the power upon the water-wheel again becomes preponderant, and the screw makes another turn or two with a slow, grinding, painful sound, suggestive of racks and torture-chambers. This alternation of rest and motion continues for about half an hour, when, every particle of resistance having been crushed out of the unhappy powder, it is at last relieved by reversing the motion of the press, and sliding the frame back to its first position. The copper sheet is raised from the top, the canvas stripped away, and the first layer of powder taken out in a thin solid cake, technically known as press-cake.

"What is the use of the canvas?" asked Miselle, watching the silent operator stripping one "cake" after another, and standing them upon their edges against the wall, where they resembled slabs of slate-stones ready for laying a garden walk.

The grave workman replied: "To keep the powder from sticking to the copper, and to make it easier to unpack."

"And what is the use of pressing it at all?" continued Miselle.

The workman looked at the Treasurer, who took up the word: "The use is principally to preserve the powder from deterioration; mill-cake powder, although considerably more powerful than pressed and glazed powder when first made, will, if exposed to the air, absorb moisture like a sponge, owing to hygrometric properties of the charcoal.

"Unpressed powder is also of unequal force, some of it, as taken from the mill, being in hard slaty slabs, some in crumbling pieces, some in dust, and as each of these conditions implies a different period of ignition, you will see that a charge of this nature would be extremely unreliable, if not absolutely dangerous."

"Why should the mill-cake powder be more powerful when first made than the pressed powder?"

"The power of gunpowder," replied

the Treasurer, taking out his memorandum-book and searching its pages, "depends upon the rapid evolution of certain elastic gases from it while in course of combustion, and the effort of these gases to escape from the gun-chamber where they are confined is what carries the ball to its mark; the more rapid the combustion the greater evolution of gas at a given instant; and mill-cake powder burns as much more rapidly than the pressed powder as shavings do than a block of oak-wood. Let me read you a few quotations to the point; here is one from Braddock's 'Memoir on Gunpowder,' one of our most reliable text-books:—

"The operations of pressing and glazing interrupt the rapidity of combustion, and therefore, in all ordinary cases, they impair the propellant force of the powder. This deterioration of force has been estimated as high as one fifth to one fourth of the range; i. e. if a given charge of mill-cake powder ranges 1,000 yards, the same charge of the same gunpowder pressed and glazed will range but 750 or 800 yards. But this refers to the powder only when newly made, for after twenty or thirty years the pressed powder would range farther than the unpressed."

And this from an English Ordnance Report:—

"Mill-cake gunpowder cannot retain its strength, because the grains are too soft and porous, absorbing moisture like a sponge: mill-cake gunpowder made in the year 1789 ranged, in 1811, 3,628 yards. Gunpowder manufactured from hard-pressed cake has a firm, close grain, and consequently is not liable to attract moisture; a charge of this powder, similar to that of the mill-cake powder, above quoted, ranged at the same time 4,193 yards, although it had been made five years longer."

"In brief: 'The operations of pressing and glazing preserve the powder; they make it competent to withstand the shaking and friction of carriage, and render it less liable to deteriorate if kept long in store, or if subjected to the influence of humid atmosphere.'"

"But," continued the Treasurer, turning the leaves of the memorandum-book, "neither mill-cake nor press-cake would be in the least available for use, without the operation of graining,—or corning, as the English call it; that is, subdivision into small particles of uniform size. One more quotation to establish this point, and we will go on with our journey. This is from Braddock again:—

"The following results occurred in a three-ounce French mortar *éprouvette*, shell 64 pounds, on firing the following charges:—

"1 ounce solid English press-cake in one piece. Shell not moved.

"1 ounce ditto, in one piece weighing $\frac{7}{8}$ of an ounce, and four small pieces. Shell just tilted out of the *éprouvette*.

"1 ounce ditto, in nine pieces weighing $12\frac{1}{2}$ drachms, the remainder in small pieces, grain, and dust. Shell thrown $3\frac{1}{2}$ yards.

"1 ounce ditto, in 57 pieces. Ranged $10\frac{3}{4}$ yards.

"1 ounce of English cannon-powder. Ranged 57 yards.

"Therefore, by analogy, we may conclude that different degrees of granulation, or fineness of the grain, would cause press-cake gunpowder to range all the way from 0 to 57 yards."

"And now," said the Treasurer, putting up the memorandum-book, "we will go on to the graining-house, which you will find the noisiest and the dustiest place we have yet seen."

So on, over the shady plank walk, with the sunshine and the brook, and the birds and the summer air, all as lovely and as peaceful as ever, on to the graining-house, where the mill-cake, broken into pieces, is fed to a pair of toothed rollers, which crunch it into atoms, and deliver it to the buckets of an elevator like that used in a flour-mill or a bark-mill, which carries it down and up and on to a pair of smooth rollers held apart at any required distance by means of a set-screw, and varied according to the coarseness or fineness of the powder required. From between these rollers the powder falls upon a

horizontal wire screen, to which a constant lateral motion is imparted, so that the finer particles are shaken through upon an apron, which carries them in one direction, while the coarser ones, remaining upon the screen, are ultimately thrown off and carried on to another pair of similar rollers.

The dust and noise of this building were, as the Treasurer had predicted, excessive, and Miselle, after as hasty an examination as her conscience would permit, was glad to emerge from the dense cloud of dust, most of which obligingly refused to leave her, and followed her quite to the next building, the glazing-house, where the powder, enclosed in long and narrow barrels, is subjected for several hours to a moderately swift rotary motion, resulting in a certain degree of polish, and the abrasion of the sharp corners and edges of the grains, thus fitting it for closer packing and more direct contact when fired.

"Next to the drying-house," said the Treasurer, cheerfully, and led the way across a railless bridge, two planks wide, elevated some twenty feet above a rich meadow already knee-deep with waving grass.

"It is the waste from the refinery that brings this meadow to what you see," said the Treasurer, complacently; and Miselle, incautiously looking down, came perilously near to making a personal inspection of the meadow, — so near, indeed, that she was fain to pause and close her eyes.

She recovered breath in an upper chamber, its chief feature a long copper tube about a foot in diameter and some twelve feet in length. At one end of this tube was a hopper, into which an attendant poured a tub of powder, while at the other end a thin stream of powder issued forth and disappeared through the floor.

"This," said the Treasurer, tapping the tube with his cane, "is a drying-cylinder. Inside this outer tube is a smaller inner one, and the space between is filled with steam; the powder passes slowly through, carried forward

by the revolution of the cylinder, and when it passes out is, as you may perceive, very warm and thoroughly dry."

Miselle caught a little powder in her hand, and was satisfied of the truth of this statement.

"Is it not dangerous to heat it so?" asked she.

"No. You cannot explode gunpowder by application to a steam-heated surface," said he; "or in any other manner, in fact, until you arrive at 600° Fahrenheit. Powder is not half as dangerous a substance, after all, as most people think. You may lay a handful upon the top of a stove, and your cook may prepare breakfast without even discovering it, unless she makes her stove red-hot. Under 600° you cannot explode it. Lieutenant Bishop, of the British army, in fact recommended to the military board at Madras that the temperature of drying gunpowder should be raised to 500° Fahrenheit, as at that point not only is the last particle of moisture driven off, but the saltpetre and sulphur are reduced to fusion, the grain becomes extremely indurated, and will not imbibe moisture even by exposure to a very humid atmosphere; the lieutenant claims that, if well made in other respects, gunpowder thus dealt with arrives as near perfection as it can be brought; for the process improves its strength, and he says that it will keep for any number of years without caking or losing its energy in any manner. The process, however, has never been carried into practical operation, and, I must confess, has rather a fearful sound, and we do not propose immediately to adopt it in the American mills.

"The next operation is to pour the warm and dry powder into this hopper, through which it falls upon a series of sieves below, ranging from a very coarse one down to one of silk bolting-cloth, through which only the finest powder can pass. Upon the way it is exposed to the action of a fan, which reduces the temperature somewhat and drives away the dust. You will see

the result of this sifting process down stairs."

And following the Treasurer down stairs, Miselle saw an upright frame reaching from floor to ceiling, with a number of spouts issuing from its face, each lettered, "F," or "FF," or "FFF," or "FPG."

From each of these spouts trickled a stream of gunpowder coarser or finer, each caught in a separate barrel, and ready now for packing and transportation. Collecting her flagging energies, Miselle followed her guide and a quantity of powder to the weighing-house, where she found a stock of pretty little white barrels, on brilliant brass scales, an intelligent-looking man, and a neat bench, above which hung the tally-board, where he marked the result of each day's labor. The little barrels contain twenty-five pounds each, and when filled and stopped have a label pasted upon the end, showing that they come from the mills of the American Company.

"Would you like to look into the cooper's shop?" asked the Treasurer.

"By all means," replied Miselle; and they turned into a place redolent of chips and sawdust, and the freshness characteristic of a carpenter's shop. Here were machines for sawing and grooving the staves, and others for fashioning the heads of the pretty powder-kegs, piles of supple hoop-strips, and two smiling young artisans, whose blithe and rosy faces presented a curious contrast to the powder-workers, who all seemed to wear the grave and stoical demeanor appropriate to men whose trade involves the possibility of a frightful death at any moment.

"The kegs are varnished, if intended for the higher grades of powder, prepared with a water-proof composition inside, and sent to the packing-house," explained the Treasurer. "To-day we are running on blasting-powder, but we make all grades and varieties. The sporting-powder is generally packed in tin canisters, and then in boxes holding a dozen canisters."

"What is the difference between

sporting-powder and blasting-powder, besides kegs and canisters?" asked Miselle, wearily.

"The principal difference is, that blasting-powder contains a larger proportion of sulphur and charcoal to the nitre. Rapid and violent explosion is not so much desired in blasting as a combustion slow enough to allow the liberated gases time to rend the rock or the ore enclosing them to the greatest possible extent before they effect an escape. Another unimportant peculiarity is that blasting-powder is more highly glazed than finer powders, by the introduction of a little black-lead into the glazing-barrels. The miners fancy that it slips into the seams of the rock more easily for this extra polish, but it is all very much a matter of fashion and fancy. And now, I believe, you have seen all, unless you would like to take a look at the stables and powder-wagons."

So Miselle looked into the great, clean, breezy stable, where seventeen horses champed their rich refinery-waste-fed hay, and admired the great powder-wagons, with their Bastille-like look of secrecy and hopeless imprisonment for whatever was once enclosed within their strong, high sides and jealously closed curtains. The romance of this last idea, however, received a shock from the Treasurer's observation, that all this apparent strength was merely intended to defend the powder from the weather in its travels, and with no idea of restraining an explosion, — a misfortune never yet occurring to the wagons of the American Company, although the Treasurer instanced one which took place in the streets of Baltimore some years ago, with terrible results, when three wagons exploded one after the other, owing to the powder sifting out of the kegs and through the floor of one of the wagons to the pavement, where it ignited by the friction of the wheels. Now, however, as the Treasurer remarked, powder-wagons are hung upon springs, and the risk of such an accident is virtually done away with.

But human physical endurance, even feminine, has its limits; and Miselle had reached the end of hers, and was rejoiced to find that the next point the Treasurer contemplated making was the stall where Dobbin stood impatient to begin his homeward journey.

That evening, as Caleb took the "Bride of Lammermoor" from the table and settled himself in his reading-chair, a sudden association of ideas caused him to turn suddenly and inquire: "O Miselle, did you go a-Maying this morning?"

"Yes."

"And what did you bring home?"

"Flowers of sulphur and the 'blood-red blossom of war.' Tell me something of the history of gunpowder," replied Miselle, from the depths of the sofa.

Caleb looked mildly surprised, but closed the "Bride," and passed a thoughtful hand down his face. Then replied: "Its history has been told a good many times, and the leading points, as I remember them, are these: In Halded's translation of the Gentoo laws (Indian, you know, my dear), supposed to have been compiled at the time of Moses, fifteen hundred years before the Christian era, we find: 'The magistrate shall not make war with any deceitful machine, or with poisoned weapons, or with cannon and guns, or any kind of fire-arms.'

"Then we have Dutens, who, in his inquiry into the origin of discoveries attributed to moderns, demonstrates very plausibly that gunpowder was known at a much earlier age than is generally supposed. He thinks 'that the attempts of Salmoneus, king of Elis, to imitate thunder and lightning, suggest to us that this prince used a composition of the nature of gunpowder; and the writers of fable gave out that Jupiter, incensed at the audacity of Salmoneus, slew him with lightning as he was employing himself in launching his own thunder.' Which certainly suggests that the unfortunate Salmoneus ended his life in a grand *feu de joie* of his own contrivance."

"Don Cassius, a native of Bithynia, who lived about A. D. 230, reports of Caligula, that 'this emperor had machines which emitted thunder and lightning, and at the same time projected stones'; and Joannes Antiochenus corroborates him.

"Appollonius Thyaneus, a philosopher, who about the year 200, or a little later, made extended travels in the East, records that 'when the Indians of towns are attacked by their enemies, they do not rush into battle, but put them to flight by thunder and lightning.' On the same authority, 'Hercules and Bacchus, attempting to assail the Indians in a fort where they were intrenched, were so roughly received by reiterated strokes of thunder and lightning launched upon them from on high by the besieged, that they were obliged to retire.' In 1218 we have mention of gunpowder by Friar Roger Bacon, who says: 'From saltpetre and other ingredients we are able to make a fire that shall burn at what distance we please.' The other ingredients appear to have been studiously concealed at first under a transposition of the letters, thus: *Lura mope can ubrie* stood for *carbonum pulveri*. But the friar told his secret, and the ingredients appeared in subsequent works under their true names.

"Some authors consider that Bartholobus Schwartz discovered gunpowder in the year 1320, and that it was used by the Venetians during a war with the Genoese in the year 1380."

"A sort of universal belief has given to China or India the credit of being the birthplace of gunpowder; and as saltpetre, its chief ingredient, is largely found in Bengal and in the northwest of India, and probably on many of the vast plains eastward in the direction of China, this assertion seems highly probable. At the same time, until the passage round the Cape of Good Hope was discovered, gunpowder must have been an extremely expensive article of European warfare. A camel could hardly carry sufficient saltpetre for three hundred pounds of gunpowder."

"Scattered all through the histories of ancient Indian warfare we may find allusions to artillery, siege-guns, hand-grenades, rockets, and various other fire-arms arguing the use of gunpowder; and it is probable that first a knowledge of the use, and then a knowledge of the art, drifted slowly westward and northward long before either crossed the seas Europeward. 'In this mode may be accounted for the first appearance of gunpowder among the Turks, Venetians, and Moors, while their enemies, the Austrians, Genoese, and Spaniards, were taken unawares by its destructive effect.'

"The manufacture of gunpowder commenced in England in the reign of Edward III. (1345), but was not thoroughly established until the reign of Queen Elizabeth, when the improved art was brought from Flanders by the Evelyns.' George Evelyn, grandfather of the celebrated Sir John, had powder-mills at Long Dulton, near Kingston in Surrey, and at Leigh Place, near Godstone in the same county, and although we hear of mills in Elizabeth's time at Faversham in Kent, those of the Evelyns

seem to have been the first of any importance in the British kingdom.

"The manufacture of gunpowder in the United States is nearly as old as the Constitution, and perhaps had something to do with establishing it as well as maintaining it. Like many other arts, however, it is chiefly confined to the Northern and Middle States; and of the score of mills within the United States, eight of them are in Massachusetts."

"Caleb, stop!" commanded Miselle, indignantly, "and tell me what book you have been 'cramming' from to this horrible extent."

Caleb laughed, and took up the "Bride." "I was reading Colonel Anderson's 'Sketch of the Mode of Manufacturing Gunpowder in Bengal,' the other day," said he, "and got most of the history out of that. Then I have looked into some other books a little; and the Treasurer dropped into my office this afternoon, and we had a little chat."

"I knew 'that somebody towld ye,'" remarked Miselle; and burrowing into the sofa-cushions, took refuge from a cruel world in the land of dreams.

Jane G. Austin.

EXPERIMENTS.

"I WISH I could hear a bat squeak," said I, looking up from my book; "but then I should want next to know what he was squeaking about, I suppose."

"What hinders you?" inquired Roger.

"Why, nobody can hear him! the sound is among the inaudible ones!"

"Then how do you know he does squeak?"

I handed my book to him. He read aloud half a page, adding, as he returned it to me: "As you say, you would be no better off for hearing the sounds, unless you could interpret them. It's a mercy we don't hear

any more nor any greater variety of noise than we do. The quiet of home is inexpressibly comfortable, after the tumult of State Street all day long."

Saying this, my husband slipped a little farther down the sofa, settled the cushions comfortably under his head, and in five minutes was fast asleep. As the clock struck eleven he roused himself, according to his custom, and went to bed. We breakfast early, that Roger may take the eight-o'clock train to Boston, and be at his counting-room betimes. Dining in the city, he is able to extend his business hours until the six-o'clock train out to Woodville.

The rattling, shrieking, and stifling of the half-hour ride in the cars end at the station, which is a ten minutes' walk from his home. He finds the house behind a tall hemlock hedge, almost hidden from sight by that and the two great pine-trees. Then comes tea immediately, then a nap on the sofa through the evening; then sleeping in earnest, then waking in earnest, breakfast, and back again to Boston.

We have been married five years, — to him years of working busily and sleeping soundly. He tells me he is a perfectly happy man; but I know better.

To me these years have been filled with *ennui* and loneliness inexpressible.

"Is it living?" I say to myself, "or is this a dreary foretaste of a drearier eternity where there will not be even sleep to interrupt the monotony of being?" It was so entirely different from the life I had expected. But then, why need I have expected more? Roger was a sensible, shrewd business man every one said, and a good man. Pleasant face, polished manners; has been all over the world, so that he is quite contented to stay at home; and is warmly attached to his home and to me, he says. In his home he finds all he wants, — complete rest.

His fashion of happiness is, alas! not mine. His fashion does not include the smallest sympathy or interest from his wife in business matters. His fashion is never to bring the counting-room to Woodville.

His fashion is also to keep Woodville and its cherished inmate free from the contamination of city gossip and bad scandal. He loves to feel that behind the hemlock hedge are purity, ease, and happiness. Gladly would I have tried, in those first months of our married life, to comprehend the intricacies of brokerage and percentage, that so our pursuits and interests might have been drawn a little nearer together. I used sometimes to inquire who had failed, especially in what Roger called com-

mercial crises, and often asked Roger if it had been a good day with him, and if he had made good bargains? But I soon learned that a woman of business was my husband's aversion, almost as much so as one of learning. So I fell back on embroidery, reading, and finally on a good many other odd things.

Was Roger thoughtless of his wife's happiness? Probably not more so than ninety-nine out of a hundred husbands. He knew that I had, strictly speaking, no society at Woodville, but then he knew also that I had no taste for the somewhat mixed and uncultivated collection of people that inevitably settle about a railway station and in time make into a town. Besides that, the shyness of youth still clung to me, unaffected by the social attrition of city life; and of intimates I had literally none, having no interest in the kitchen department, nor liking much even the cat or dog. In winter I had the fire for company; in the summer walks by myself, unbotanical and ungeological.

There was all the world for me, to be sure, as well as for the water wagtail bold; what of that, so long as I did not lay hold on it? Roger "supposed women enjoyed pottering about their music and dresses, plants and things." So our two lives went on like parallels, without touching.

No wonder I became morbid, restless, and most uncomfortable. Many women, situated as I was, die by inches, and say they die gladly. People around them call it religious feeling, but that is a mistake, I know. They die for want of interest in any person or thing. In all the Inquisitorial torments, none so cunning has been ever devised as "the day before one, and no way to spend it." The moments come to be like those fatal drops of water that falling, one after another, make the tortured victim wish for death, to escape them.

Somebody said he was ready to die, being so weary of putting on his stockings and shoes every morning. I can easily believe it.

When such women die,—such “hot-house” women, as they might well be called,—their husbands only are sorry. To their husbands they have been something. What is it? Solace,—perhaps. Rest, home, somebody who will bathe the tired brows with camphor or cologne-water, that so they may the more readily go to sleep, and the more readily flee away in the morning.

If any one asks why with sufficient means a woman like this did not connect herself vitally with the world about her, with society, of which there is always enough and of good enough quality somewhere, I can only say, I did not know how to do it, and nobody told me. I had not so much animal spirits and bodily health as a redundancy of mental calibre and nervous susceptibility. Placed in a city, or even in a large country connection, inducements to activity and healthy social excitement would have oiled the wheels of life. Most people have the advantage of family ties, and keep their minds lively and interested with daily events, however trifling. But I had no brothers, sisters, or children. Anybody who has lived, even for one year, the sort of life I had for five, may see why I became as weary of it as Job was of his life, and that day and night my pillow was wet with my tears. Heartily I agreed with him, in the question, “Can that which is unsavory be eaten without salt? or is there any taste in the white of an egg?”

It may be thought that, in my luxurious home, I had certainly no right to complain. Yet did those rose-leaves underneath fret and exasperate me continually with their doubling and crumpling.

I had not even kitchen *émeutes* with which to vary my days, for Sarah Foster had lived always with Roger’s mother, and now lived always with me. Barker took care of the garden and stable, and drove me when I wanted to go. But in five years one gets the drives all by heart. Once I had happened to say I was lonely, and

Roger asked me, “Why not have a companion?”

Everybody knows that a companion is the very last thing to be suited in. I could have bitten my tongue for saying anything about it. I could not tell Roger, what most of all I felt, that he was no companion for me; that if I could only look forward during the day to a drive with him after tea, through the pleasant lanes, he choosing devious pathways and coming out on unexpected roads; nay, if he would only sometimes chat with me at evening, or bring home to my seclusion the sense of fresh life, of movement and bustle that filled his own days, and so break up the dreary tranquillity of Woodville, I should want no better company.

But this I could not say to the kind-hearted fellow, who would not understand me, and could not make himself over, even to please me.

I said I fell back on several odd things. Among them was the study of spiritualism, or spiritism as some people call it. I did not care for or half believe the stories circulated and printed as evidences of the supernatural communications laid claim to by the Spiritualists. But neither did the decisions of scientific observers weigh much with me. That element of faith, which science of course derides, was one which the workers in this new field frankly claimed as necessary to success; and they had a right to insist that the force or agency by which they wrought their wonders should not be weakened, or negatived, as they called it, by the personalities of the incredulous. It seemed to me fair that they should insist on the conditions most favorable to the success of their own experiments; that observers should be passive, at least, and not so anxious only to prove the experiments worthless.

In a large company it was difficult, if not impossible, to preserve the favorable mental conditions. I determined, therefore, to make my own experiments in solitude, with caution and candor. I thought I could keep my mind in a

state of passive expectancy, that some unknown force might act in a new way. That was faith enough, and not too much. Supposing a chair or table to go across the room with the lightest possible touch from my finger, I should be certain that it went by something besides a mechanical force. Supposing a pencil wrote down a hitherto unknown fact, or a voice distinctly to propound an entirely new proposition, or perhaps a prophecy, I should be quite certain that a force foreign to, and outside of, my own mind was acting there, however it might have been introduced.

I am sorry to say that neither chair nor table ever moved so much as half an inch. I think if there had been four hands instead of two, it would have stirred, with the influence of the "dominant idea," as the philosophers call it, and possibly, after once going, it might have formed a habit of moving itself, or we might have got one of moving it. But I did not dare to say a word to Roger about my experiments, lest he should forbid my touching tables at all. He had said once, that it was enough to drive a person crazy.

As tables would not move, I tried spirit-writing. I sat hours at a time (I had hours enough !) with paper and pencil before me, until my muscles began to twitch from the effect of a constrained position. Between making marks with a pencil all ready pointed to the paper, and making intelligent signs, the transition was so gradual as to be imperceptible. The passivity which I had determined on became, from the nature of mind, quite impossible. I could not stop thinking for more than a quarter of a minute, do my best. Ideas, disconnected and fragmentary, but still my own, shaped themselves from the mere force of habit, against my will, into sentences ; and my determination not to think at all, but to vacate the premises as it were, ready for any foreign occupant, ended in a collection of vagaries. I could not surrender a faculty, do what I would, and I could not stop the working of my own

machine. What stopped my experiment at last was sheer fright. My arms became so affected by a habit, as I may call it, of nervous excitement, that I came to have little or no control over their muscles. I knew well enough that "a medium" would call me in a hopeful condition. But I intended to be fair and honest with myself, and to take nobody's opinion of my own sensations. This nervous derangement in my arms increased daily, though I never perceived it, except when sitting at the table, waiting for wonders ; but when, one day, I felt a corresponding spasmodic action in my feet, I began to see that it could have nothing to do with spirit-writing. A dreadful apprehension that I should keep on dancing forever, like Hans Andersen's naughty child with the red shoes, seized me, and, dropping pencil and paper like a hot coal, I pushed back my experiments finally into the corner. It was not a fair trial, but I felt myself too excitable to be a fair judge, and nobody could judge for me. Perhaps it was a morbid action of the auditory nerve which, during these prolonged sittings, called my name repeatedly and distinctly. I think it was. But it was something of this sort that made me believe in the possibility, under high nervous excitement, of hearing what are generally called inaudible sounds. There are well-authenticated instances of hearing at preternatural distances. This would not be anything more wonderful.

In this book about sounds (I don't know whose it was, — Tyndal's perhaps, — I forget the author), he says there are many sounds, inaudible to the human ear, which probably convey impressions from one animal to another ; and he cites the mysterious workings of bees in a hive, where the insects evidently act from knowledge conveyed through sounds, although they are entirely inaudible to the observer. The human ear, he thought, was susceptible to only a certain amount of vibrations. When the sound was above or below a given scale, it could not be dis-

tinguished. Examples were cited of sounds on the piano, more or less shrill, which could not be heard; and individuals also were said to differ materially in susceptibility to particular sounds.

Making all allowance, however, for delicate organizations, and for trained senses like those of the savage, who hears and defines sounds inaudible to a civilized ear, there seemed no doubt of the existence of humanly inaudible sounds.

Reading this book attentively by a good coal-fire in the library, with literally nothing to break the utter quietness of the time, and no realities to disturb the wildest fancies, I fell to considering the practicability, under favorable circumstances, of entering this forbidden world of knowledge. I always thought Eve showed herself much brighter than Adam in her search after knowledge, and could perfectly understand, as can any scholar in the district school, the want of charm about permitted branches.

It seemed probable enough that a world of actors and talkers might be in the spaces about us, imperceptible and inaudible to us only from the coarseness of our senses. We look at the bee-hive and ant-hill, and we behold method and purpose; therefore we believe in some directing sounds in that interesting multitude. But even if one could hear what the bees say, one would soon tire of it, for what can it all amount to but talk about house-keeping, work, and honey? Now, in the spaces immediately above and around us, perhaps even in this very room, there may be high, serene thoughts, even celestial articulations, if one had only ears fine enough to hear them. Probably if such a state of the senses could exist, it would be only under a morbid condition of the whole nervous system. Still, if such a condition could be superinduced at will, what a luxury it would be! That it is possible for it to exist there can be no doubt. Setting aside all the claims of spiritism, natural somnambulists say

and do marvellous things,—as marvellous as hearing inaudible sounds. In that "other state" into which they enter they develop powers unknown in this; they sing, declaim, walk fearlessly in dangerous places, rise in the night and write sermons, or solve mathematical problems. Darkness and light are indifferent to them; they look unwinking at the blaze of a candle or see with shut lids. Such persons are in an abnormal state, we say; but observers cannot account for the possession of these faculties, unowned and unwished for in a natural state.

The more I thought about this matter, the more curious I became to peep into that undiscovered world which touched me at every point, yet was millions of miles away from my perceptions. It seemed possible that the senses might be so refined, so clarified, as easily to thrill to a higher scale of harmonies than had ever yet touched mortal ear. There was that harp of many strings, which anatomists say is in a cavity behind the tympanum, the number and perfectness of the strings determining probably the susceptibility and correctness of the musical ear. There is nearly as much difference between a highly trained sense of harmony in one person and the musical obtuseness of another as between hearing and deafness. Training may do much, of course not all. The dying often say they hear beautiful music. Those who stand about the bed hear nothing. It takes the half-transfigured sense to hear the celestial strain.

These considerations determined me to make the experiment of sharpening my senses through the methods of the ancient eremites; only as I did not want to see visions or dream dreams, but to see and hear the real sights and sounds about me, I preferred to refrain even from the "scrip with herbs and fruits supplied." I became impatient to enter on my negative action, to polish the mirror in which I longed to see the reflection, and to gaze with cleared eyes "into the heart of things."

It is surprising to see how difficult it

is to do anything out of the beaten track. Innumerable obstacles shoot up in your way. It would seem an easy enough thing to do, to leave off eating for forty-eight hours if one desired it; but in this slight divergence from ordinary habits I was at once met with difficulties. The first meal I left untouched called forth distressful expostulations from Roger, and threats of the doctor at once. Though I fell back on a headache, which needs neither dinner nor doctor, I could not very long make that excuse. It would do only for twelve hours. How to procure a refined organization on Sarah Foster's roast ducks and mince-pies it was not easy to see. The avoidance of her dainties, however, seemed even more difficult than their acceptance.

By the best fortune, a man came the very next evening and roused Roger from his nap to get him to go to New York for one and probably two days. Two days! In that wonderful space of time how much might be done! how much should be done! I could hardly look a little sorry to have Roger go, so very glad I was to have him gone for forty-eight hours.

Looking back, it seems many years ago that I made this experiment about sounds. I cannot be sorry, on the whole, though it was a strange, wild thing for me to do, under the circumstances. But it was only, yes, only six months ago, and now it is the very last of summer. I must go back to the time when I gave Roger the book to read about "inaudible sounds," and the February morning when Roger went away, and when I excused myself from taking an early breakfast with him, on the plea of that convenient and still lingering headache.

As soon as I heard the dying shriek of the railway whistle, I began with my preparations. I went to the wine-cellar, and brought therefrom two bottles of champagne. I met Sarah, who looked surprised, but made no remark. I could not explain to her that I did not intend a carouse in my husband's absence, for in fact I did intend and

expect to drink every drop of it. In the first place, it was a diet fit for angels, if one must have food; and next, I remembered to have heard lately of several cases in which physicians had kept their patients alive on it for days, when they were incapable of receiving any other sustenance. For every reason it seemed the fittest support for my prospective condition. I felt it but too probable that the entire absence of ducks and mince-pie might end in my being more faint in sensation than vivid in perception. The first thing, however, was to obscure Sarah's sharp-sightedness; and here I confess to entire unscrupulousness. But moralists differ about the degrees of deception in which we are warranted to indulge. Some say we have a right to make a false reply to an impertinent question. I have no excuse to make for myself, unless it may be the necessity of the case. She was very affectionate, very worrying, and very curious.

Now there came down a good, long, soft, steady snow-storm. Not that this curtain was needed to protect me from intrusion, for I had neither neighbors nor friends. I began already to feel weak and tremulous, for I had only trifled with my tea the night before, had not breakfasted, and now it was three o'clock. Sarah brought me in two slices of cold mutton, as I had desired her to do, and the same of dry toast. As soon as she went out I opened the window and threw the mutton out as far as possible. It went in a curve, for I never could throw straight, and lodged by the garden pump. "Never mind," I thought, "the snow will soon cover it."

Then I began to meditate again, and to feel very weak, and, if the truth must be told, rather hungry.

That tiresome Sarah again, for the tray. "I do wish you'd let me make you some herb tea!"

"Nonsense, Sarah! I shall be well to-morrow."

"But you look so pale!"

"Sarah, if you will keep Barker from slamming the doors, I shall do."

Then she went out, and I began again on existences and agencies ; not thinking connectedly, but only in a rambling way, how delightful life might come to be, if I could hear at will all the sounds of nature and interpret them intelligently. Then I should have the singing stars in earnest, and the talking brooks, and the laughing water ! Then I should hear what the poplar whispers among the highest branches, and what the south-wind means when it whistles so sadly.

Sarah again, and this time with a clouded brow. "Was n't that a mutton good, ma'am ?"

"Excellent, Sarah ; uncommonly tender and nice."

"Why could n't you eat it then ?"

"Eat it ? why, what can you mean ? I ate it, every morsel, and very good it was."

As my intention was to deceive Sarah and not myself, I did not see why I should utter a verbal truth to express a spiritual lie, which many people are very conscientious about doing. But I proved too much, for Sarah said, as if she thought I had taken leave of my senses : "Wal, ma'am, Cæsar's come into the house, now, with them are two slices of mutton I cut off for you with my own hands ! I could swear to the jag on one of 'em, if I was to be called up. I declare, I believe we're all bewitched !"

"I guess you are, Sarah," said I, carelessly ; "now just see that the house is quiet, and I will try to get some sleep for my headache."

"Do, pray ! you look as white as a sheet, and your eyes as big as saucers."

At last she went slowly away, looking back repeatedly, till I was half frantic with vexation. I arranged a plan by which I could dispose of my next day's viands without suspicion, by the aid of the china-closet sink and a large tin luncheon-box ; and, very faint and weary, I went to my bed and a disturbed sleep.

The next day I carried my plans into execution, and, affecting to be nearly recovered, desired that I might not be

interrupted in my writing, which "was a vital matter to have finished," I told Sarah. Very unnecessarily stated, also, for I forgot to put writing-materials in juxtaposition, so that when she brought my dinner into the library, as I directed, no appearance of writing was to be seen. Only myself, lying on the sofa.

"You hain't wrote, after all ; you must be sick."

"Not sick, only stupid. You can come in in a few minutes." Then she went out, and I stored away the things in the luncheon-box as before.

Sitting by the fire and looking into it, I had the following dream, as I suppose. In thinking of it, I cannot realize that it was one.

I dreamed that I was sitting before the fire in the library chair, just as I really was. This library is just what one should be, not too large, and with a bay-window, over which falls a dark crimson curtain. A table and three easy-chairs, with Roger's couch, complete the furniture, with the exception of some good engravings on the walls, and a cast of the Venus of Milo in the west corner. I loved to look at this beautiful statue, which had a mirror behind it, and I was never tired of its variety of noble expression. In my dream I rose from my chair to look at its reflection in the glass. After admiring as usual the lovely turn of the neck, I raised my eyes, and above it saw, not my own features, but those of a stranger ; not two faces, but only one ; and that one of a dark-complexioned girl, with black, floating hair and the eyes of an Indian savage. These eyes glittered with a metallic lustre and with unspeakable hatred. Heavens ! can I be transformed ? and into this awful-looking girl ? My own eyes and hair are light brown, but where, then, are they ? This stranger must have intruded herself into the room, and got between me and my own reflection somehow. Surprised and offended, I turned around to rebuke her, supposing it might be one of the gypsy gang which I knew had settled near the station ; but on looking behind me

I saw nothing whatever. In the mirror the figure still stood, fronting me defiantly and with disdainful curves of the red mouth. All at once the unnaturalness, the horror of it, struck me. Instead of being paralyzed by this horror, I felt that I had a power within me of dismissing the figure. It must, I was sure, be a mere vagary of the brain, induced by my long fast. It depended on myself, of course, whether it should stay or not. Thus reasoning, I turned to the mirror and signified by a gesture my wish that the hateful shadow should depart. It did not move, but seemed very, very near me, and I saw, what I had not before perceived, that there was a frightful deformity on one cheek.

Now it occurred to me for the first time that there might be ugly sights, as well as sounds, of which the healthy mortal senses take no cognizance, and from which their obtuseness is a merciful protection. Possibly something in the quicksilver at the back of the glass might give apparent body to the form there, while on the air of the room there would be no impression. I made repeated attempts to reconcile this discrepancy, as I glanced sharply about the room, taking in the fire, the furniture, the pictures, and every object, which, looking as usual, showed that this figure was probably only an hallucination. Whether it was that, or a phantasm whose existence could be known only in a morbid condition of the eyes, it was of no use to reason any longer about it, but to dismiss it with a resolute firmness that should admit no evasion or trifling. It would be well to signify also that the dismissal was final and permanent.

As I turned towards the mirror the Indian met my look with a sneer so familiar and derisive, that it was clear she had read my thoughts and despised my plans. I determined to banish her with one word. But, alas! this one word I could not utter, nor could I move any more than if I had been dead. Then I saw, in its full horror, into what an unknown realm of exist-

ences I had entered, only to become the powerless sport of its detestable occupants. Then I saw why the air is a merciful veil over these loathsome objects, as the blue and silver of the sea curtains the formless monsters below. Terrified by my subjection, and possibly induced by the bestial contortions of the Indian face, I howled at it as my dog Caesar would have done. It was the only power of utterance or movement left to me, and the figure sprang at me with a responsive howl a thousand times more terrible than my own. Then came a struggle for life and breath. It might have been moments, though it seemed hours, before my good Sarah Foster got me well shaken up into life and reality. She had been "so worried," she said. She had come softly to the door to see if I was really asleep. O, what would she have thought to see that terrible, that hideous phantom?

As soon as I could get rid of my kind tormentor, I walked straight to the mirror and looked coolly and derisively into it. There was myself, only myself. A great comfort it was. Recovered from my tremor, I drank my first glass of wine, which soothed and sustained me. What a spiritual sort of diet champagne was! I began to wonder in what form the invisible and inaudible world could manifest itself, and whether the perception would remain after being once acquired. It seemed very doubtful. I might live on fruits and vegetables, perhaps, for weeks, and perhaps Roger would n't notice. I think I expected to obtain a sort of key or *open sesame* to the new realm, by which I could visit it occasionally.

My dream troubled me somewhat, as the night shadows thickened, and made me less hopeful. It seemed a warning vision sent to check my wanderings. I said to myself: "Perhaps God does not choose us to see the evil, which yet for reasons of his own he permits. He has certainly provided us with protective antipathies against some, and hidden from our sight much more.

How could we rejoice in the warm sunshine and tropical fragrance of the earth, if we were continually cognizant of the millions of serpents and scorpions that bask also in its pleasant heat? Better to be content with the sights that mortal eyes take in, and the quiet of daily life, than to ask for a resounding roar from oceans of insects and animals that will only bewilder and fatigue."

That sounded sensible, but was by no means convincing. Roger would be back by to-morrow morning, and then adieu to opportunity. I had fasted forty-eight hours, and felt myself clear-headed and capable, if only the revelation would come. Ringing for that inconvenient Sarah, I told her I would not have supper, that the headache still continued, and that abstinence and repose would be the best cure. Sarah shook her unbelieving head, but was only eloquently silent; while I meditated on the curious way in which people are inevitably related and entangled, so that independent action was almost impossible. All the falsehoods I had spoken and acted had been useless, for Sarah evidently suspected me of deception, if not a softening of the brain. What we call firmness sustained me, however, and I went to bed from mere inability to sit up.

After my mock breakfast I went back to the library, where I somehow felt certain that a revelation would take place in the course of the day. There I could command seclusion and perfect quiet. It had been a very painful night to me. Though no supernatural revealings had come, nor horrible visions, yet I heard with painful distinctness the common sounds about the house, and the shutting of the barn door forty rods away. But, in fact, Sarah, in her great desire to keep the house quiet, left me nothing to complain of. Only the roaring of the wind in the chimney, and the starting of the nails, which every now and then sounded like pistol-shots, kept me alert and wakeful. I swallowed eagerly the champagne, which I was glad I had allowed my-

self, and wondered why it was that Sarah's viands were no longer tempting to me. Starving people, it is said, are tormented with visions of long tables groaning under every sort of luxury. I had only an eager thirst, without the smallest appetite for food; and this thirst I was resolved to appease only at regular intervals. Let the brain have its vividest action, its keenest perception; no clouding nor bewildering by any accident.

The storm had passed on, leaving three feet of snow. The earth, as far as I could see, seemed asleep under a white blanket; only the hiding hemlock hedge had a dark bar of green at its foot. Every twig on the pine-trees was covered with rime and sparkled in the sun like fairy jewelry. The bay-window was half covered with thick frost.

I sat down close by it, looking curiously at the building that was formed on the pane next to me. It appeared very much like that engraving of the Cologne Cathedral over the mantelpiece; the pinnacles pointed and fretted like that, and the sparkle of the sun tinting them with rainbow beauty. Was there any possibility of forms being reproduced in that way by the reflection of light from the originals? The window seemed to act like a mirror. Presently it all faded, and I was glad to go back to the fire. The chair in which I sat was embroidered by my own hands; so was the *brioche*; so was the cricket; so was Roger's couch. Birds, beasts, flowers, and fishes, what a menagerie of needlework! how many hours of weariness had I filled with this barefaced deception called industry! Roger called me ingenious and "so industrious." They all looked at me, — these animals, — with the queer eyes I had created for them, and seemed to say they wished themselves under a plain green covering, just as I had so often wished in my weariness and despair for myself.

On the window-pane there were new scenes now. Why should that be? I questioned, since the air of the room

is not changed ; with the same temperature, it is strange that the landscapes seem coming and going like dissolving views, unless — unless — they are in some way the reflection and imprint of shapes existent though unseen in the atmosphere immediately connected with them. There was a curious convertibility of sight and sound in the room. The forms on the pane faded and filled again, with a sort of pulsating light, like the auroral light ; but these pulsations, as I watched them, corresponded accurately with the beats of the clock, and, likewise strangely enough, with the steady throbs of my own heart. I continued to look steadily at these pictures, and to speculate on their causes and changes, until I was quite certain that the basis of this crystallized reflection must be either in the room or else just outside. If in the room, it must be reflections from the projected fancies of unseen beings.

Now it was a forest ; now a stream, fringed by sorrowful alders ; oftenest a shadow of stately architecture, like those pinnacles of beauty and supernal aspiration on the wall. I tried to detect the mysterious law of form which lay under all this shifting ; remembering, meanwhile, how the stalactites in that cave in Virginia extended their crystals into floral shapes and even into folds of drapery ; remembering the "curtain-room," where the rich festoonings of marble are caught up and fastened with stone lilies, so wondrously like the sculptor's work that one would say, Nature had reversed her own order and copied art, instead of being its original.

Presently I discerned the law, or thought I did. The vaporous particles, in congealing, crystallized in hexagons, though of such infinite variety of size that they showed to the eye something like the finish of fine Roman mosaic ; while, by the continuous pressure of the surfaces, the sharp angles were softened into curves. If one looked carefully, it was easy to discern the six-petalled flower in the wreath, or the six-sided pillar in the temple. Under

all the figures, constantly changing as they were, there seemed always the genius of beauty and luxurious abandonment. They melted off, reformed, clustered in a thousand graceful shapes, or indicated in silver lines the distant landscape. These were not reflections from my mind, certainly.

The short winter day wore on without incident of any sort. I wrought out my daily work of trying to delude Sarah Foster, and afterwards watched constantly the creations on the window. How long they lasted I don't know, nor whether the twilight began to fade into evening. The hues and shifting lines were clearly visible under the fire-glow, but I was quite certain that I need not be indebted to daylight nor any light for the revelations on the window-pane. If they were to come, they would come.

When the voice called "Samuel !" in the Hebrew story, he answered, "Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth !" This was in my mind, while I sat quietly looking and waiting for what might be revealed. Nothing I could do would hasten it, but I knew that my vision had already become so sharpened, that I should be able to see its character.

I swallowed the last glass of my two bottles of champagne ; not too much sustenance for over seventy hours.

It looks like nothing I ever saw, — waterfalls over alpine peaks ; forests which stretch away for miles beyond the silvery pillars in the front : altogether a study of perhaps a particular character of scenery, but such as might be in fairyland or dreamland. It wants the real, live look of even a copy from a real landscape. But what a waste of creative power ! All this tracery, so wondrously fine, so elaborately finished, so graceful, so fantastic, — if I heap a little coal on the fire all this fairy beauty is transmuted or lost. Is it real at all ?

What infinitude of energy there must be in the Creator, when the silent night works all these transcendent results ! As I thought this with a swelling heart (for the contemplation of nature always

makes one devout, I think), a strange thing happened to me, — something I did not expect, and was not at all thinking of. I have said that Roger and I were childless; but this was a subject on which we never spoke to each other. I knew by something I had once heard him say, how strongly he desired children, but he never intimated so much to me, nor would allow that we were not perfectly happy as we were. I have said before, how far from happy I was. Fathers and mothers, who perhaps forget to be grateful for their blessings, even because of their profusion, cannot guess at the long drought of natural sympathies, the parching thirst with which the childless look on family groups.

This is what came to me. The view on the pane, — for the picture was confined to one pane, and the mullion gave it quite the effect of a frame, — this view, which was a forest, a garden of flowers, or a pillared sanctuary, as the lines melted and formed anew, became suddenly alive with a thousand children. These shapes bounded, sported, swam, dived, flew, climbed, more like birds than anything, only they were not winged nor angelic, but only lovable, lovely children. Their forms were quite transparent; for as one of them came near the front, to the foot-lights, as it were, I distinctly traced the outlines of others through his figure. All of them seemed quite independent of gravity, bounding and shooting in all directions, without effort and with ineffable grace. The boy in front seemed to be drawn unwillingly toward me, and I felt sure that a power went from my eager eyes which he could not resist, for he advanced slowly, like a magnetized person, until his plump little feet rested on the line next the window-sash. His blue eyes looked full into mine, and his rose-bud mouth dimpled out these words distinctly, but, oddly enough, like the rhythmic beats of the clock on the mantel-piece.

"We are souls!" he said, in a pure, metallic tone, the quality of which I recall more vividly than even his words.

"Do not think we shall be lost or melted away when the frost-work that makes us visible to you is gone. We are wills, created by the Supreme Will, which orders and governs all. Whenever that Will shall connect us with your human vital forces, we shall begin our earth life and take on ourselves loves, cares, and sorrows. Till then we live in all natural forces, and revel in every form of elemental beauty. Though we are not yet born into your world, you may see us and such as we are in every childish face you meet, though in filthy gutters, though in slimy pools —"

The clock rung out the hour, the baby eyes ceased to look at me, the form faded off among others and floated into distant cloud-shapes. I looked vainly for it to come back, and turned, weeping, to the room of silence and vacuity.

I had listened to the inaudible sounds at last; and this was what they told me, filling me with tenfold sadness. But one thing I was sure of, — I breathed a purer ether than that of earth; I had discoursed with pure intelligences. My rarefied, clarified senses at last had illuminated the invisible. All the mystery of life will be revealed to me at last! plant-life, star-life, and the air-world about us, all will henceforth be intelligently related to me! all the silences will be filled with melody, every grass-blade have a meaning beyond form and color, every leaf whisper its true-love stories, and all existences above, around, or below me give me a keen delight in their contemplation. Time passed rapidly, until, confused with the infinitude of my coming enjoyments, I felt their multitudinous pressure, like the rushing sound of the night-winds. It was dreadfully full, after all, this space, where the whole of life was crowded so! where past, present, and future would be always sparkling, clambering, floating, like those wondrous forms just now! It was only confusing to think about it; and closing the shutter, I sat once more before the window-pane, which now stood dark

and unrevealing. I hushed every sense of the outward, gazing hungrily and vainly for the blue-eyed baby that had stood there so lately and talked to me. Then it grew darker and darker, and I knew something more was forming for me.

Some rafters crossed over the top of the pane. The perspective, at first dim, was soon clearly apparent, and I found myself looking into a long attic room lighted at the remote end by a small skylight. A young girl under the light sat on a soap-box and leaned against a scantily covered cot-bed, with a slate in her lap, on which she was casting up sums. She looked inexpressibly weary, and every minute pressed her forehead as if her head ached. Another box was in the room, holding a few garments and books. On a nail by the window hung a bonnet and veil, and the girl herself wrapped a woollen plaid shawl about her closely, and shivered, as I could see, even at that distance.

I remembered the face at once. She was the daughter of a townswoman of mine, Mildred Fay, who at sixteen had married Richard Ream, on a three days' acquaintance, because he was a handsome fellow, who professed to love her distractedly. She had an idea that no man can be known much before marriage. A long acquaintance served no purpose, she said. Men would always conceal their faults before marriage. She would take her chance. Three sorrowful years brought her to her life's end. She was very glad to go from her worthless and regardless husband, and to leave little Marion to the care of her aunt. I had heard about this, and that the aunt had died, leaving all her property to Marion Ream. The all could not be much, judging by what I saw now. She was trying to keep a school; but she had only two scholars. I don't know how I knew this; I must have heard it somewhere. She looked very cold, though she had two red spots on her cheeks, as handsome Mildred Fay had. Her pocket-book of shabby leather lay

on the floor; so did an old leather card-case.

I remembered my early companion and schoolmate, and saw her living likeness in the plain, poor girl before me. In fact, I had once or twice met her somewhere, and once asked her to call on me. When she did come she had that identical old card-case in her hand. She was very proud looking, very sensitive, perhaps; and when I asked her what her plans were for the future, answered me coldly that she was teaching school. When she went away I asked her to repeat her visit, but she said, with great curtness, that she had no time for visiting; and that was really the last I had seen of her. That was six weeks ago.

A bright shaft of light showed the bareness and utter desolation within the attic. The girl looked up from her figures on the slate, as if she saw me gazing at her. As if she saw me, she fixed those angry, hollow eyes on mine, and through the moving lips I heard her say distinctly: "You selfish, self-indulgent, hard-hearted woman! I hope you may live to know not how or where you are to get the next crust like this!"

Then she turned her back to me, and I heard her white teeth crunching at the hard bread in her lap. I remembered, then, that Mildred had always hoped that in her prosperous old schoolmate and friend her orphaned daughter might find protection and sympathy. I wondered how I had forgotten it. The old aunt had written it to me once, and in my answer I had enclosed a ten-dollar bill. After that I had heard nothing more, until she came to see me.

While I recalled these facts, with a little shudder at the maledictory character of the girl's face, the face itself was gone, and the soap-box. The rafters melted into a roof and the front of a block of four-story houses. The house nearest me had evidently been once quite a palatial residence, for the flight of granite steps was surmounted by two great granite lions, and the street itself was broad and lined with

fine old trees. I perceived that I was looking at a house in a once fashionable quarter of the city, but now occupied only by a foreign and poor population. The windows of all the houses were so closely filled with heads, there was such a swarming multitude of every age, that it did not surprise me to hear mingled murmurs of vulgar quarrelling and profanity. Every room was as crowded as a bee-hive. In the cellar of the first house was a sick family. The father had been lying in the corner on straw and rags for the last two weeks, and the children, who were more or less ailing, fretted and teased the draggled and exhausted mother. The air here was stifling and the odors unspeakable. That strange hallucination which we all have at times, that the scene before us is not new, but has been experienced before, came over me now, as I looked at this suffering group. Before I spoke to the woman, I knew what her answer would be. I said: "Why don't you open a window, and let in a breath of fresh air? Such an atmosphere as this is enough, of itself, to keep you sick."

"O, an' indade, mem! it'll do for them that can buy coals and them fifteen dollars a ton, to open their windys, mem! Sure, it's hard enough to kape warm wid the ould stove here, let alone openin' dures and windys!"

"There is sense in that," said I to myself.

"If any leedy now would give us some coal," muttered the woman, as she caught up one child after another, trying to hush their wailings, "if they'd send us some coal instead of expariencin' about the air, it would be a blessin', God save us!"

It began to rain, and the sleet sounded sharp on the window-pane, — my window-pane, I mean. Through it I could see the woman diligently stuffing the holes and cracks about the windows and broken floor, with aprons and rags. There were many cracks, and, I should say, many clothes also. Improvidence, untidiness, and wretchedness every way. What use was it to

help such people to-day, when to-morrow would find them just as helpless, shiftless, and uncomfortable?

A woman crossed the street at this moment, and in looking at her I lost sight of the family in the cellar. For these scenes were like the motes in one's eye, — you cannot fix them, only follow them; and here it was necessary for me to follow closely, or how could I see? So many varieties of human experience crowded before me, that I was obliged to select and confine the vision somewhat. It was discouragingly indefinite too, for how could I know whether what I saw was the past or the present; whether, indeed, it might not be something in the future, where the curtain of fate is drawn up a little way, for our instruction or our faith; or whether it were a clairvoyance on my part, which might hereafter possess me, even against my will, like Zschokke's extra faculty or insight? He saw the past lives of people in their faces, disagreeable and painful to both parties as it might be. He could not get rid of his clairvoyance.

The woman I saw was an active-stepping little person, with brown hair and cordial gray eyes, with pleasant features, and what would be called a patient and persistent rather than an energetic expression in them. As I looked, I felt a dim recognition of the face. Where could I have seen her? I struggled vainly to recall where.

Dressed in a waterproof suit, with stout boots, a felt bonnet, and holding a large umbrella, she walked steadily and quickly up the street. At a house three or four doors beyond the one I had been looking at she stopped, let herself in with a latch-key, and went up stairs.

With an effort of my will, like pulling the slide on a stereoscope to bring the picture closer to the eye, I was able to discern, even through the walls of this large house, the slight figure passing from room to room, without knocking, and seeming to be quite at home; stopping now here, now there; talking with first one, then another; and always keenly observing everything about her;

finally, going out of the house with eight children from six to twelve years old, all tidily dressed with cloaks and hoods, and each with a basket on her arm.

As they slid away out of sight, I had a clearer view of the interior of the house, which I could not get before, being, perhaps, somewhat confused with too numerous impressions. The house looked fully inhabited, but was quiet and in good order; the floors were clean, and on some of the walls were gayly-colored pictures, mostly of a religious sort. The whole house, of four stories, contained eight families. No one lived in the cellar, which had eight partitions for fuel and stores, each room locked and numbered for the family to which it belonged. In the first house I looked at, I counted seventy-two persons. This house had forty in it, including sixteen babies.

I marvelled much what the little woman had to do with it all. Listening attentively, I heard several women grumbling about the strict way in which they were kept to their agreements of cleanliness, order, and quiet; and also at the unavoidable punctuality with which they were held to their rent-payments. They agreed she was a good landlady, and wonderful about drainage and air, but thought her very sharp very particular, — indeed, decidedly over-particular. They would prefer throwing slops out of window. They wished she would n't concern herself so immediately with their daily affairs, or at least would let them know what days she was coming. They wished she would n't insist on the children's going to school, and a dozen things more they objected to, being in all equally stupid and ungrateful.

While I was thinking how little sense poor people have, and that, in this woman's place, I should no longer trouble myself for such a thankless, unreasonable set, the house filed off to the left, and I saw the little figure, followed by the eight children, enter a handsome house facing the Common. The rain had stopped some time before.

The sight of a large, cheerful-looking breakfast-room, with a bright wood-fire and Turkey carpet, had, I confess, a most soothing effect on my nerves. I was aware of a sort of pleasant savor, in place of the noisome atmosphere with which I had lately been familiar. I do think I have a natural distaste for the wretchedness, filth, and squalor that always seem to come in the train of poverty. To odors, particularly, I have always been extremely sensitive, and the unrefined, coarse, unpicturesque aspect of poverty in our own country had always something so repulsive and distasteful to me, that I was quite certain my mission was never among poor people here. Perhaps it is different in foreign countries. In fact, I could not endure to go near our poor. We shall be on an equality in heaven, they say; but there the poor will be out of their bodies, which will make a difference.

The little woman led the children up the broad staircase, and past a niche where the bronze statue of Achilles held a gas-burner. She stopped to tell them about Achilles, which I thought quite unnecessary, and afterward explained the method of bronze-casting, which was tiresome, as I had lately read about it. Then she took them through a wide upper passage to a back sitting-room, where the sun shone in at the windows. A work-table and cutting-board, a book-case and writing-desk, with slates and pencils, and several chairs, were the only furniture. It seemed devoted to these children, who took off their wrappings and presently removed from their covered baskets each one a garment, on which they diligently sewed. Leaving the children at their silent employment, I looked after the little woman, who had gone into the front chamber, and was making rather an elaborate toilet. Her street-wear was put away, and after she had taken a bath, and reappeared with fresh, costly raiment on, I should not have known her as the same person who passed swiftly up South Street, under the wet umbrella.

Having inspected the children's work, she read aloud while they sewed; looking sharply after them, and not allowing them to dawdle or stop work for a moment. They were taught what I should call double tasks from the first, and it seemed cruel to me, who always take off my thimble when I begin to speak. I noticed she read memoirs and stories of real people to them, and not fairy-tales, by which I concluded she was not an imaginative person. When they had sewed an hour, she set them to cutting out garments of the simplest fashion after paper patterns, showing them how to make the most out of the materials, and offering them certain inducements for skill in shaping and contriving. I observed that these children were clean, and that even their teeth and nails were carefully attended to.

"Any one point of personal niceness, or any new quickness to the sense of beauty, elevates their standard of taste, and tends to civilize them, you know," she said, turning towards me with a confidential nod. She seemed to count on my sympathy, and to feel that I could perceive the good sense at the basis of what she was doing. But when they had finished their sums in addition and subtraction, she set them to drawing on their slates, from a picture over the fireplace.

"This is really absurd," I thought; "what possible advantage can it be to a parcel of wild Irish children to cultivate a taste for art?"

"It all helps," said the woman, with a pleasant smile; "they will learn to write more easily, if nothing else, and besides, they enjoy it. It is only for the children I have much hope. Their parents will not change their old habits essentially, I am afraid."

When these children left the room, they walked out backwards, as if from the Queen's presence, saying, "Good morning!" and altogether behaving as nicely as Beacon Street children. Left alone, the woman went into the parlor, where she practised Bach's music; and then read a volume of Spanish ballads diligently, until company inter-

rupted her. I was convinced that she did not resemble either Mrs. Pardiggle or Mrs. Jellyby in the smallest degree. I afterwards discovered that this rich, childless woman carried out a great scheme of benevolent activity in the simplest way, by her personal interest and superintendence; that she really lived out what other people only thought out, and without sacrificing a single domestic duty or household grace. She had hired this large house in South Street as an experiment; underletting it to a limited number of families, under stringent conditions of order and neatness, and giving them pecuniary inducements to the observance of her rules. She hoped and expected that, once put well in train, these families might be seed-grain for many more. The children in that house she called her own in an affectionate way, and really seemed to be interested in them as a near relation rather than a mere benefactress. I remember seeing them one evening at the theatre, all the eight together in a box with her. It seemed to me a dreadfully unwise proceeding, but perhaps it was not. This woman's husband was in active business, as active as my Roger, but it seemed his heart safely trusted in her, for he gave her *carte-blanche* for her charities, and sympathized heartily in her ideas.

I wondered whether Roger would feel so too; and just then a man's voice in the next room said distinctly, "Yes, I would!"

What was very odd, I recognized the voice at once. It was Roger's, in a loud, hearty tone, as if he would like nothing better.

While I gazed on the surface of the darkened window, I felt the room suddenly fill with gigantic pinions which flapped their shadows to and fro, so as wellnigh to suffocate me. Then they gathered closely above, around, and under me, and I floated off into insensibility.

The first real, live, healthy sound was Roger's own joyous voice at my opening my eyes. He had just entered the

house, and found me lying dead on the sofa. The open window, the fresh life of a February sun, the rush of cold, healthy air, rejoiced me. So did the sight of Roger, who had been chafing my hands and holding ammonia to my nose, with such vehemence that I was glad to come to life to escape being killed. He was pouring wine into a glass, in answer to Sarah Foster's asseveration that I "hadn't eat enough to keep a fly alive since he went away, and she hoped he would n't go again!" (Had she put it on the ground of sentiment?)

All I could say, and that in a very weak voice, was, "Milk porridge!"

It is astonishing now to think what a vast amount of common sense entered my system with that sustenance!

"What a good comfortable world it is!" I said, after Roger had told me about his journey, and of the heavy snow-storm that had delayed the trains, and of his horror at finding me lying senseless in the library; and had finally gone away to Boston.

I remembered that my last thought among the rush of shadowy pinions which bore me off into darkness had been a prayer for life, and a new life. Was this world, in which so much stood waiting on one side to be done, and on the other side, the rich whom God had given means and opportunity to help, to be no better for my being in it? Was not the gulf to be bridged over by such as were unfettered by domestic cares and responsibilities? How plainly one's duty seemed pointed out! Why had I never read it, not even one word before?

Life had come back to me, and I would try. True, I expected to make miserable work of it. I always had; never gave to the right person, and

always did the wrong and injudicious thing. So I had long ago stopped doing. But there were people enough who would n't do the wrong thing; judicious, experienced, discriminating, — everything that I was not. They should have my money, my interest, and my own sympathy.

Thinking of this, and pacing to and fro with the window still open and the sun shining in, for it was yet only midday, and wrapped in my warm shawl, I heard sleigh-bells ring in the distance.

"And so, because I am tired of driving, forsooth! I have forgotten about the many people who can never drive at all, who would be so glad to go! Let me do something, before I die, for some one besides myself," said I, contemptuously, to that other most contracted, most despicable self, whom I felt the stronger for abusing.

"Tell Barker to bring the horse and sleigh round; and just bring me one more bowl of your delicious, *delicious* milk-porridge!" said I to the gratified Sarah.

I drove to the house where Marion Ream kept her little school, taking with me (remembering the cold attic) a wool-wadded cloak and hood, and insisting that she should put it on and drive with me. Afterwards, she was with me very often, sometimes for weeks; she taught me much, and I hope I did her some good in return. I have not yet accomplished any great matter in the world, but I find life very full of work to do, and the days only too short. Little children have been better off for me, I hope; and their angels no longer accuse me before the Father. In the last six months I have not had a dreary moment, nor been tempted, even once, to starve myself by way of occupation.

C. A. H.

FECHTER AS HAMLET.

TEN months have passed since Charles Albert Fechter, unheralded save by a few words of praise from the pen of that best of dramatic critics, Charles Dickens, made his *début* before an American audience. Eight vivid human creations have stood before us on the stage, and the first blush of enthusiasm has had time to pale in the presence of the broad daylight of sober second thought. But what if enthusiasm be still aglow, and the verdict of the first night remain the verdict of the last, more strongly put, more strongly felt, because of this same test of time? And time declares that not Ruy Blas, nor Claude Melnotte, nor Henri de Lagardère, nor Don Cæsar, nor Frédéric de Marsan, nor Monte Cristo, give proper scope to Fechter's ability. You see him in sections, not as a well-rounded whole. Of all his *répertoire* thus far given in this country Hamlet is the only character that has fully called out Fechter's resources; and whether or not his conception be acknowledged as Shakespeare's, you are strangely moved. Who, however, is presumptuous enough to proclaim *Shakespeare's* conception of Hamlet? From Voltaire, who declared Hamlet to be the work of a drunken savage, to Goethe, who would have made innumerable changes in the plot, from Coleridge to our own brilliant Lowell, "there has been much throwing about of brains." That Shakespeare has not "revisited the glimpses of the moon" to tell us what he does mean is strong evidence against the theory of modern spiritualism. Never have written words, the Bible excepted, inspired a like amount of controversy; and as Catholic and Protestant, Episcopalian and "Radical," Presbyterian and Unitarian, find their creeds in the Testaments, so do critics find authority for their various dogmas concerning Hamlet. While

no two entirely sympathize, shall the right of private judgment be abolished? and because a great actor disagrees with certain great writers, shall he be crucified and told that his is not *Shakespeare's* Hamlet? It is an easy criticism to make, Shakespeare being "safely stowed" and no contradiction possible. It is so cheap as to fall first from the lips of those who have never given Hamlet a thought, and are therefore quite prepared to pass judgment.

"It is n't Shakespeare's Hamlet," exclaimed an illiterate man, who sat behind me at the theatre one night. "It is n't right, you know. He does n't give you the proper accents. It's a foreigner's interpretation."

"Well, but — Hamlet's a foreigner, is n't he?" asked a timid little woman, in a timid little voice.

"Yes," responded the critic, with a somewhat troubled expression of face, "he's a foreigner, he's a foreigner, but," and then exultation broke through the trouble, — "but *you see it's an English play!*"

Argument ceased. Everybody was carried away by the illiterate man's superior intelligence. Nevertheless, the timid little woman *did* murmur that it was very interesting and there must be something in it, as heretofore she had always gone to sleep over Hamlet.

According to Mr. Richard Grant White, Hamlet is twenty years old at the beginning of the play, and ten years older at its close. If this computation be correct, Hamlet is indeed guilty of most wretched vacillation; but does not proof run full tilt against Mr. White's theory? In the graveyard scene, as everybody knows, we learn that Hamlet is thirty years of age, and after carefully scanning the play, we see that its entire action cannot cover more than ten days. In the first act Laertes leaves for France, and Hamlet decides

to "put an antic disposition on." The second act opens with Polonius sending Reynaldo to keep watch over Laertes, after which comes Ophelia's description of Lord Hamlet with his doublet all unbraced; this being the first symptom of Hamlet's madness, not more than a day is likely to have elapsed between the conception and execution of his plan. Concluding with the arrival of the players and Hamlet's arrangement for the performance of "The Murder of Gonzago," which he distinctly declares shall take place the following night,—"We'll have't to-morrow night,"—there can be no questioning as to the date of the third act. And the fourth is like unto it. Hamlet kills Polonius in the third act. The fourth act opens with the Queen's narration of the bloody deed,

"Ah, my good lord, what have I seen *to-night*?"

by which it is clear that the fourth act begins in point of time as quickly as the third act closes, that is, on the night of the third day. In the third scene Hamlet is brought in guarded, and replies to Claudius that "you shall nose him (Polonius) as you go up the stairs into the lobby." The time still remains the same, as proved by the King's immediately despatching Hamlet to England: "I'll have him hence *to-night*." In scene fourth Hamlet appears upon a plain in Denmark, not yet having sailed. It may still be the night of the third day, although the meeting with Fortinbras and his forces would rather indicate daylight. If so, the fourth day has set in. Between this scene and scene sixth four days must elapse, as it is then that Horatio receives Hamlet's letter in which he says: "*Ere we were two days old at sea*, a pirate of very warlike appointment gave us chase. . . . These good fellows will bring thee where I am." Two days out and two days returning to Denmark make four, and adding the previous four days, we have eight in all. The next and last scene follows speedily, therein Hamlet's letter to the King being delivered.

Well, but how is it with Laertes, who reappears in scene fifth, proclaiming revenge for the death of his father? How can he return from France in four days, especially if he be in Paris, where Polonius has sent Reynaldo to seek him? Not leaving until the first act, it is utterly impossible for Laertes to have made very great progress in his journey, and travelling leisurely, as would be likely, he is overtaken and brought back. Yes, but he *sets sail* for France, and is it probable that, having such a start, he can be overtaken? Of course he sets sail, Elsinore being on an island; but the route to Paris is far more direct by land than by sea, and the time indicates that Laertes must have taken to horse on the mainland, a mode of travelling in which he could be easily reached by forced posting. Drowned at the close of the fourth, Ophelia is buried in the last act, so that but few days can intervene between the two events. How many, one cannot assert; although as Hamlet in his letter to Claudius, in the fourth act, says, "*to-morrow* shall I beg leave to see your kingly eyes," and the fifth act brings about this meeting, twenty-four hours need not have elapsed. European Catholics bury their dead speedily. It is therefore safe to declare that the fifth act could transpire on the ninth day, and cannot in reason be delayed beyond the tenth.

One is also tempted to "wrangle gently" with Mr. White for his statement, that the Ghost does not appear in the third act, Hamlet being the victim of an optical delusion. Does not the Ghost speak to Hamlet? Why is not the Ghost as real in the third as in the first act? Merely because invisible to the Queen, and visible to Horatio and Marcellus? This is nothing new in supernatural scenes. "Be subject to no sight but thine and mine," says Prospero to Ariel, "invisible to every eyeball else"; and Ariel curvets, unseen of mortals. Hamlet would have doubted his senses had not the guards and cooler-headed Horatio beheld the Ghost; but how contrary to the dead

King's tender nature to make himself visible to the Queen, who, already plunged in agony, would probably be crazed by so awful a spectacle as the apparition of her murdered husband?

And with regard to Wittenberg, which seems to be the source of so much discussion, there is nothing to indicate Hamlet's still being a student. Overcome with grief, disgusted with the world, he talks of going to his old university town, where he passed his youth and where he is most likely to find true friends, among them Horatio. He is easily dissuaded by his mother, and Wittenberg is brought to him in the guise of fellow-students. From first to last the text infers Hamlet's long acquaintance with the court and outside world. His welcome to his old friend, "Horatio, or I do forget myself," denotes that the two have not met for some time. Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are spoken of as

"Being of so young days brought up with him";

and Hamlet conjures them "by the consonancy of our youth." If people would only cast commentators aside, and read Hamlet by the light of their own understanding, they would be surprised to find how much clearer the text is than writers are willing to have it appear.

Fechter's Hamlet is not the introverted student of tradition. He is a man of the world, in the noblest sense of the term, of joyous disposition, whose temper—and here he agrees with Goethe—assumes its mournful tinge upon the death of his father and the unseemly marriage of his mother; "not reflective or sorrowful by nature, reflection and sorrow have become for him a heavy obligation." The Queen refers to him as "my too much changed son," and the King marvels at Hamlet's transformation:—

"So I call it,

Since nor th' exterior nor the inward man
Resembles that it was."

"I have of late lost all my mirth, foregone all custom of exercises," Hamlet states; by which we get a glimpse of a boon companion, "the observed of all observers," one "loved of the dis-

tracted multitude," who delights in all manner of sports, who up to the last moment is so sensitive of his prowess in fencing as to be somewhat jealous of Laertes's reputation, and longs to cross weapons with him.

His first impulse in grief is to commit suicide,—ever the panacea of hot-blooded, sanguine temperaments. No civilized country can rival France in the number of its suicides, yet no people are possessed of equal *esprit* and buoyancy. But Hamlet is a good Catholic: "The Everlasting has fixed his canon 'gainst self-slaughter"; and, though he twice meditates taking his life, is restrained by religious faith. He is brave and daring, as a soldier ought to be. He is not afraid of his father's ghost; for on hearing of its appearance he quickly exclaims, "I would I had been there," and "I will speak to it though hell itself should gape, and bid me hold my peace"; hence he is awed, not terrified, by the Ghost's presence. The Ghost makes night hideous, because it shakes his disposition "with thoughts beyond the reaches of our souls." Is this the language of a man given to cloistered musings and inward living? How can Hamlet possess

"Courtier's, soldier's, scholar's eye, tongue, sword," and lead the life of a seer? It is impossible. He is first courtier and lastly scholar, be it observed. He is a lover of acting, he is an acute critic, and therefore must be *of* the world, as well as *in* it. Introverted minds take little pleasure in the studies to which Hamlet evidently gave much time. Hamlet's humor is so deeply implanted, that even in the most solemn moments he cannot refrain from apposite punning. It is carried even to grimness "over this fellow in the cellarage." This extreme from grave to gay is not an attribute of introversion, but quite accords with the nature of such a man as Fechter puts before us.

Fechter leaves no doubt as to Hamlet's passionate love for Ophelia, and truly it is grateful to see the meaning of the text fulfilled. A man who "hath given countenance to his speech with

almost all the holy vows of heaven," who begs "dear Ophelia" to

"Doubt that the stars are fire,
Doubt that the sun doth move;
Doubt truth to be a liar;
But never doubt I love";

who over her grave declares, "that forty thousand brothers could not, with all their quantity of love, make up his sum," and who immediately upon the assumption of madness falls to such perusal of Ophelia's face "as he would draw it," and

"Raised a sigh so piteous and profound,
As it did seem to shatter all his bulk
And end his being,"

must be a much more intense lover than actors and Shakespearian commentators have heretofore admitted. If words mean anything, they mean that Hamlet's passion is far stronger than Ophelia's. With his intellect and unusual depth of feeling, it must of necessity be so; and if Ophelia goes mad, it is because she has less character to withstand sorrow.

Neither is Fechter's Hamlet at any time really mad, Coleridge and the Kembles (Charles Kemble excepted) to the contrary. He carries out what Lowell has since admirably written: "If Shakespeare himself, without going mad, could so observe and remember all the abnormal symptoms as to be able to reproduce them in Hamlet, why should it be beyond the power of Hamlet to reproduce them in himself? If you deprive Hamlet of reason, there is no truly tragic motive left. He would be a fit subject for bedlam, but not for the stage. We might have pathology enough, but no pathos. Ajax first becomes tragic when he recovers his wits. If Hamlet is irresponsible, the whole play is a chaos. That he is not so might be proved by evidence enough, were it not labor thrown away."

True to his times, Hamlet does not scruple to take life when it comes between him and the work of his destiny. "By Heaven, I'll make a ghost of him that lets me," is the threat launched at even so dear a friend as Horatio. "*I find thee apt*" in revenge, says the Ghost; and quicker than thought Ham-

let dedicates his life to one fell purpose, beginning by wiping away all "trivial, fond records," — Ophelia's love. Nevertheless, he is held back by "a wise scepticism," "the first attribute of a good critic," which suggests the possibility of the spirit's being a devil. Fechter's Hamlet is restrained by reasonable doubt, not vacillation of purpose, and no sooner "catches the conscience of the King" than he could drink hot blood. He does not kill the King at prayers, because of that Catholic faith which would send this same villain to heaven, and thus kill all revenge, which is the motive of his action.

"*Would I had met my dearest foe in heaven,
Or ever I had seen that day,*"

— his mother's second wedding day, — is the heaviest curse that Hamlet can invoke upon his own head. Would he then be likely voluntarily to bring about its fulfilment? He keeps himself in training by self-reproach of cowardice, of which there is not the slightest evidence in deeds. He cannot, as he has promised the Ghost,

"With wings as swift
As meditation, or the thoughts of love,
Swoop to his revenge,"

and he "falls a cursing like a very drab," "unpacking his heart with words," as such natures are very apt to do when circumstances stay their actions. Without a moment's hesitation he stabs Polonius, but repents the deed, and is engaged in drawing aside the body when he is seized and brought *guarded* before the King, in which condition he is unarmed. Hurried with "fiery quickness" on board a bark for England, there is no opportunity for action, but, thoughts being bloody, he forges letters whereby Guildenstern and Rosencrantz — "they are not near my conscience," pleads Hamlet — are doomed to death the moment they reach their destination. Chased by pirates, Hamlet alone becomes their prisoner, and returns to Denmark. Horatio goes to meet him; and as they tarry in a graveyard, the burial of Ophelia drives him to momentary frenzy. Without weapons, he cannot then and there kill the King,

nor is the most desperate mind controlled by more than one great passion at a time. In the next scene, which must be immediate,—as not till then does Hamlet refer to his escape and plot against his treacherous fellow-students,—he does not hesitate to tell Horatio of his purpose to “quit the King with his arm” during the short interval that must elapse ere the fate of Guildenstern and Rosencrantz is known in Denmark. Being sorry for having forgotten himself to Laertes, whom he loves and whom he has wronged, he accepts the challenge of a bout at fencing, that he may then and there apologize to the brother of his adoption, and also gain easy approach to his intended victim, the King. He cannot kill the King with bated rapier; but the moment he learns that the weapon in his hand is unbated and envenomed, Hamlet stabs the evil genius of the play. The King has no doubt of Hamlet’s capability of murder, as proved by his saying after hearing of the death of Polonius, “It had been so with us had we been there,” and by his haste in sending him to England.

Such, from his acting, is Fechter’s conception of Hamlet, sympathetic to me in all things, except perhaps in this matter of vacillation; and even here one may make out a strong case. The only lines that can be quoted against Fechter’s theory are the few appertaining to the Ghost’s reappearance.

“Do you not come, your tardy son to chide,
That, lapsed in time and passion, lets go by
Th’ important acting of your dread command?
O, say!”

inquires Hamlet.

“Ghost. Do not forget. This visitation
Is but to whet thy almost blunted purpose.”

Hamlet but repeats the self-accusation prompted by over-sensibility as to the performance of an awful duty.

“Ah, but what blunted purpose does the Ghost come to whet?” asks the reader. Suppose now this visitation be to whet Hamlet’s almost blunted purpose of *speaking daggers, but using none*? The Ghost, unlike his former self, says not one word about Claudius.

He straightway exhorts Hamlet to *step between his mother and her fighting soul*! Whereupon Hamlet’s tone changes from violent denunciation to soft questioning, “How is it with you, lady?” One moment more and the passion that made a corpse of Polonius might have wreaked vengeance on the guilty Queen; for though Hamlet declares that he is “neither splenitive nor rash,” yet is there “something dangerous” in him, a something that might have led him to strangle Laertes had he lost entire self-control. That the Queen believes her son capable of the deed, is seen at the opening of this scene, when Hamlet says:—

“Come, come, and sit you down; you shall not budge;
You go not, till I set you up a glass
Where you may see the inmost part of you.”

These are not desperate words, and yet the Queen cries out:—

“What wilt thou do? *Thou wilt not murder me!*
Help, help, ho!”

Killing the Queen would not be impossible to the Hamlet of Fechter, who is convinced of her complicity in his father’s murder.

“O Hamlet! speak no more;
Thou turn’st mine eyes into my very soul;
And there I see such black and grained spots
As will not leave their tinct.”

Mere marriage with a brother-in-law, even after two months of widowhood, hardly admits of so fearful a confession; and her fear of being murdered by Hamlet, leads to the inference that she knows she deserves the punishment. Further coloring for this hypothesis may be obtained in Hamlet’s response to the Ghost:—

“Do not look upon me;
*Lest with this piteous action you convert
My stern effects; then what I have to do
Will want true colors; tears perchance, for blood.*”

Surely this does not indicate absence of will on Hamlet’s part; and as stage ghosts always produce the effect they desire, the dead king attained the purpose of his “pale glaring.” Certainly he had no such tearful influence over Hamlet during the first interview. Is the object, then, the same? Indeed it would seem not; and since I find Shakespeare so ready to agree with

Fechter, I doubt my ability longer to withhold allegiance to this startling innovation.

The critic may entertain one opinion of Hamlet one day and another the next; he may be very positive in some particulars and not quite sure in others. He can leave a door open by which his opinions may make a dignified exit, should an intellectual breeze threaten to overthrow them; but the actor enjoys no such privilege. He must thoroughly understand his intentions before being able to interpret them. He must feel certain that, according to his light, his conception is right, or he cannot render it with force or send conviction to the hearts and heads of his audience. The business of the critic, therefore, in this matter of Hamlet, is not so much with the conception of the character as with the manner in which the actor's conception is carried out. If it is consistent from beginning to end, if it takes hold of you so strongly as to prevent any escape from it, if its great power absolutely bullies you out of cherished theories, if its humanity makes you look back upon previous Hamlets as so many lay figures galvanized into spasmodic action, if it absorbs attention and creates a positive sensation, then does the actor merit critical enthusiasm; for the critic's business is to *appreciate*, to appreciate is to estimate justly, and just estimation calls for as much delight at what is fine as disapprobation of what is false. Fechter produces all these effects. He is great, not only in his originality, but in his rendering, the greatness of which I will do my poor best to show by photographing his Hamlet in such details as are food for critics and actors.

Fechter's study has not been confined to his own part, as is seen immediately in the reading of Horatio, upon the entrance of the Ghost:—

"But, soft; behold! lo, where it comes again
I'll cross it, though it blast me. Stay, illusion!
If thou hast any sound or use of voice,
Speak to me. (*Ghost stops.*)"

Heretofore Horatios have senselessly

crossed the Ghost's path, as if such a step would stay its progress. Not so with Fechter, whose Horatio makes the sign of the cross, at which the Ghost stops, as a Catholic ghost should. Once interpreted thus, intelligence exclaims "Of course"; and yet Horatios have been crossing the stage for three hundred years!

He is gloomy enough, is Fechter's Hamlet, as he sits beside his mother, starting when the King addresses him as "*our son*," yet gently exclaiming, while kissing the Queen's hand with courtly grace, and giving by almost imperceptible accent a key to the estimate in which he holds his uncle-father,

"I shall in all my best, obey *you*, madam."

Left to himself, he gazes fondly at his father's portrait, worn about his neck, and illustrates the beautiful apostrophe by reference to it. Thus does Fechter prepare you for the text. You can't misunderstand, if you would. His Hamlet deceives no one. He is as honest as the day is light. He draws his lines plainly between friend and acquaintance, and his fondness for Horatio is strongly defined from the moment of meeting. There are three distinct shades of tone in "*my good friend*" (meaning Horatio), "*I am very glad to see you*" (meaning Marcellus), and "*Good even, sir*" (meaning Bernardo). Hamlet wastes no affection. He is generous, but he is losing faith in mankind, and trusts few.

An expression of great and tender beauty passes over Fechter's face as, with clasped hands, he murmurs,

"My father,—methinks I see my father";

while there is filial pride in his explanation, with hand upon Horatio's shoulder,

"He was a *man*; take him for all in all,
I shall not look upon his like again."

When Horatio describes his encounter with the Ghost, Fechter crosses his hands the moment his father is mentioned, as if praying for the unhappy spirit. The action is entirely natural to a Catholic. Appealingly sweet is his

"Did you not speak to it?"

addressed to Marcellus, to which his Horatio replies,

"My lord, I did."

Doubting, not willing to believe without strong evidence, he gives the line, "Then saw you not his face?" as if it read "Then you did *not* see his face," which seems reasonable from Horatio's answer:—

"O yes, my lord, he wore his beaver up.

Hamlet. I would I had been there.

Hor. It would have much amazed you.

Ham. Very like, very like."

These lines have always been given as a response to Horatio. Fechter, meditating on the startling intelligence that the apparition wore *his beaver up*, murmurs, "Very like," as if the sentence read, "Very like—my father." Of course the Ghost would amaze Hamlet. He is already amazed, therefore the "very like" fits far more gracefully into Fechter's setting. Tears fill his eyes as he asks,

"Stayed it long?"

When Hamlet, Horatio, and Marcellus appear in the fourth scene, Fechter causes Hamlet to come from an opposite direction. Why? Because he has previously said that he would visit them "upon the platform, 'twixt eleven and twelve." They meet for the first time, and the dialogue says as much. Strange that it takes a Frenchman to find this out.

Enveloped in a gray picturesque cloak and black velvet cowl, Fechter's Hamlet drops the former, and, with hands on Horatio at sight of the Ghost, delivers the invocation with solemn, tender earnestness, removing the cowl at the word "king," and throwing a filial pathos into "father."

"Go on, I'll follow thee."

His exit is slow, but in no way unnaturally measured, with sword unsheathed and held in the left hand as if it were a cross.

"Alas, poor ghost!"

is given with pitying sweetness of tone. Kneeling at the words, "I *am* thy father's spirit," Fechter does not rise un-

til the adjuration, "Haste me to know," etc.; and though his back is turned to the audience during the Ghost's confession, there is much expression in his pantomime. Nevertheless, but for the exceedingly clever management of the Ghost's instantaneous disappearance,—the invention being Fechter's,—it were a pity to lose the play of feature which Fechter could throw into his eager, listening silence. He bows profoundly at the Ghost's, "Fare thee well at once!" and when Horatio calls without, "Heaven secure him!" meaning Hamlet, Fechter, intent upon the Ghost, prayerfully adds, "So be it," turning the words to a deeper significance than they have ever possessed. What immediately follows is no less acutely treated. Horatio alone is his valued friend, Horatio alone has so far sworn not to reveal the news, and Hamlet hurriedly begins to tell his story, "There's ne'er a villain in all Denmark," when, suddenly remembering and doubting Marcellus, he turns from his purpose and adds, "but he's an arrant knave"; at which platitude Horatio has reason to criticise his friend. The line,

"You, as your business and desire shall point you," is addressed to Marcellus. Hamlet's wild and whirling words are because of his presence. He is talking to conceal thought. Taking Horatio's hand (according to stage direction), he remarks to him,

"Touching this vision here, —

It is an honest ghost, that let me tell you."

Then looking at Marcellus, he continues,

"For your desire to know what is between us,
O'ermaster it as you may."

Fechter's Hamlet does not insult Horatio by assuming superior wisdom and exclaiming, "There are more things in heav'n and earth, Horatio, than are dreamt of in *your* philosophy," but accents *philosophy*, by which the pronoun possesses the same significance as when Edmund Kean substituted *our* for *your*.

With arm linked in Horatio's, Hamlet says, "Let us go in together," and,

leaving Marcellus down the stage, addresses to him the parting injunction, "And still your fingers on your lips, I pray." The line is certainly intended for Marcellus, who cannot be included in Hamlet's invitation, inasmuch as, after the exit, Hamlet must impart the Ghost's secret to Horatio, the two friends not meeting again until the third act, when Hamlet, in referring to the play, says, —

"One scene comes near the circumstance
Which I have told thee, of my father's death."

If circumstantial evidence prove aught, it proves the truth of Fechter's conception. There is no ranting in his rendering of the couplet,

"The time is out of joint," etc.

Its power is in its concentrated desperation.

The admirable shades and touches in the second act are equally "pertinent." Dialogue never received more varied or more thoughtful treatment. Polonius never attempted to master such keen madness. "Conception is a blessing; but as your daughter may conceive, — friend, look to 't." It is a mad laugh that follows "friend." Hamlet points to his open book as he mutters, "look to 't," and Polonius, literal in all things, runs his eye over the page to learn the "cause of this defect." Hamlet watches him narrowly, as if to see how the simulated madness takes effect, when the old man delivers his side speech beginning, "How pregnant sometimes his replies are!" and there is a world of weariness pent up in his reiterated exclamation, "Except my life!" Tired, tired, tired! Revenge and sorrow were never nature's heritage to such as he. Too brave, too conscientious to shake duty off, relief is sought in word and expression.

Hamlet's reception of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern is most cordial, until he sees his uncle's portrait around the neck of the latter; then expression and manner change, and the question, "Were you not sent for?" is put eagerly, with suspicion of foul play, which waxes stronger as he bids them speak "to the purpose." Words mean some-

thing when thus interpreted. Hamlet's rejoinder, "And those that would make mouths at him while my father lived give twenty, forty, fifty, an hundred ducats apiece for his picture in little," is illustrated by his taking up the picture pendent from Guildenstern's neck. Upon dropping it, he crosses to the right, and makes an "aside," perfectly comprehensible to all, of the succeeding sentence, "There is something in this more than natural, if philosophy could find it out." Were audiences given to acute criticism, and did reason rule the day, theatres would resound with bravos at such renderings as this, rather than at the tearing of passion to tatters.

You know by the tender music of Hamlet's voice in exclaiming, "O Jephthah, Judge of Israel, what a treasure hadst thou!" that his thoughts are with "the fair Ophelia," and it is this memory that renders him so gentle in checking Polonius for interrupting the player. Hushing him, commanding silence by putting finger on lips, with as much kindness as if the old courtier were indeed a big baby, Hamlet takes up the text, "So; proceed you," and for the first time you see the little word "so" set in its proper action. Hamlet listens with such interest to the actor's speech as to accompany it with unconscious pantomime and silent repetition of the words; but this is not original with Fechter, Garrick having done the same.

"But woe, ah, woe! I had seen the mobled queen."

"The mobled queen!" repeats Fechter's Hamlet, thinking of his mother; and, struck by the coincidence, becomes so absorbed as to leave Polonius unchecked when he again interrupts the first actor. There is genuine, respectful sympathy in Hamlet's manner of instructing that the players be well treated; such sympathy as, if prevalent in society, would raise the stage to its proper level, — beside the pulpit. Equally wonderful in its humanity is the pity breathing through Hamlet's command to the first actor, that Polonius be not mocked.

The tremendous soliloquy closing this act is marvellous in variety. Its gradual *crescendo* and *diminuendo* are most artistic, while the climax,

"The play's the thing,
Wherein I'll catch the conscience of the King,"

comes like a sudden revelation to a tortured brain, and is clutched at (if I may say so) with all the energy with which nature seizes upon forlorn hopes.

Fechter points the moral of the soliloquy, "To be or not to be," by bringing on an unsheathed sword, as if he had again been contemplating the suicide that would free him from his oath.

Very beautiful and equally original is Hamlet's scene with Ophelia. He is a lover the moment his eyes fall upon her, and casts aside every semblance of madness until Ophelia returns his letters, when the change of Fechter's expression is as great as the change of language; but when listening to the gentle maiden's reproaches, there is pictured such agonized regret at throwing away every chance of happiness as makes the heart ache; for Fechter's Hamlet is always real, always a suffering man, never an actor.

And how pantomime illuminates a sentence is seen in Hamlet's reference to the power of beauty, which "will sooner transform honesty from what it is to a bawd, than the force of honesty can translate beauty into his likeness; this was sometime a paradox," — here Fechter pauses, looks sadly at the letters in his hand returned by the woman Hamlet loves, and then adds, — "but *now* the time gives it proof." Still his heart is bursting to speak the truth, and the confession, "I did love you once," is given with tearful eyes and choked utterance. When Ophelia exclaims, "I was the more deceived," his tender action, unseen by her, denotes that he *must* fold her in his arms; but, forced to restraint, he honestly, earnestly begs her to get to a nunnery, as the only sanctuary worthy of her. Then, seeing Polonius, he, to test Ophelia's truthfulness, asks, "Where's your father?" and, finding her false, bursts into frenzied raving, intended

far more for the ears of her father than for the helpless creature trembling before him. Again subdued by love, Hamlet approaches Ophelia with extended arms, almost embraces her, but, recollecting that he is watched by Polonius, cries pathetically, "To a nunnery, go," and, thoroughly overcome, rushes off the stage. In this scene Fechter does not allow Hamlet to see the King, for this espionage would so convince him of his uncle's guilt, as to render the play unnecessary.

Nothing can be finer of its kind than Fechter's intelligent and colloquial delivery of Hamlet's advice to the players; and in this connection it should be stated that he was the first to introduce a boy with chopins, in lieu of a woman actress.

Hamlet gazes fondly at Ophelia when announcing the Court's coming to the play, showing first the lover before putting on the mask.

"I eat the air, promise-crammed; you cannot feed capons so," says Hamlet.

"I have nothing with this answer, Hamlet; these words are not mine," rejoins the King.

"No, nor mine, now"; and Fechter, by an exquisite action of the hand, makes you see why those words are no longer his. They have passed into the air for all time, and belong to space. Pantomime has its prose and its poetry. This action is rhythmic.

He never forgets to spare Polonius in the presence of others. "I did enact Julius Cæsar," maunders the old man. "I was killed i' the capital; Brutus killed me."

"It was a brute part of him," Hamlet replies; and then, walking away, adds as an *aside*, "to kill so capital a calf there." The very word "there" suggests this treatment of the sentence, and yet again Fechter discovers it.

"Nay, then, let the Devil wear black, for I'll have a suit of sables," reads the customary text; but what says Fechter? "Let the Devil wear black 'fore I'll have a suit of sable." The mystery is solved at once, and, turning to

the folio Shakespeare, you find the line so written down. As the folio is supposed to have been printed from a playhouse copy, Fechter's version is probably as correct as it is intelligible.

"*Ophelia.* 'T is brief, my lord.
Hamlet. As woman's love."

Most Hamlets insult Ophelia by hurling this reply at her. Fechter gives it as if communing with his own thoughts, and looks the while toward his mother. "That's wormwood," is addressed to Horatio; and, "If she should break it now," to King and Queen.

Admirable is Fechter's action after the discovery and call for "lights." Throughout the play Hamlet has lain at Ophelia's feet, but has *amused* himself (so reads the conventional stage business) with nothing, not even with the specified fan. Before him lies the text of the play, which he follows closely, thus anticipating it and watching the effect upon the royal pair. Discovery made and audience gone, Fechter tears the leaves from his play-book and scatters them in the air, as he rises and delivers the well-known quatrain. His utterance is rapid, excitement at last renders it thick. The blood rushes to his head, he puts his hand to his throat as if choking, "Ah, ha!" becomes a gasp, he leans upon Horatio, and for relief, for solace, calls for music. There is no bridging over an inexplicable chasm, such as we have seen from childhood. It is perfect nature. Upon the entrance of Guildenstern and Rosencrantz Hamlet falls into a chair, from exhaustion, until his mother's name is mentioned, when, out of that courtesy which is rarely forgotten, he rises.

Guildenstern, with tha locket about his neck, is far more hatefu. to Hamlet than less treacherous Rosencrantz.

"*Ham.* Sir, I cannot.

"*Guil.* What, my lord?

"*Ham.* Make you a wholesome answer; . . . but, sir, such answer as I can make, you shall command: or rather, as you say, my mother; therefore, no more, but to the matter: my mother, you say—

"*Ros.* Then, thus she says: your behavior hath struck her into amazement and admiration."

Here Hamlet snubs Guildenstern, and

"my mother, you say," is addressed to Rosencrantz, who immediately takes up the thread of argument as shown. Hazlitt declares that acting Hamlet is like the attempt to embody a shadow. He would never have made this statement had he seen Fechter's key to the character.

The whole scene with the Queen is one panorama of tragic pictures. Having killed Polonius, Fechter elaborates Shakespeare's few words by the agony of his expression at having made so fatal a mistake, and by throwing away his sword that it may not be repeated.

The excitement produced by the Ghost's appearance yields to regret at his departure, and a tenderness toward his guilty mother, who finally kneels before him, being raised up gently at the words, "Confess yourself to Heaven," etc. When Hamlet bids her good night, she attempts to bless him, but is firmly, not unkindly repelled. This action is followed by the lines,

"And when you are desirous to be blessed,
 I'll blessing beg of you."

Before the sobbing Queen retires, she once more turns to her son, exclaiming, "Hamlet,"—this is Fechter's introduction,—and stretches out her hands for a filial embrace. Hamlet holds up his father's picture, the sight of which speaks volumes to the wretched woman, who staggers from the stage. Kissing this picture, Hamlet murmurs sadly,

"I must be cruel, only to be kind":

then, taking light in hand and raising the arras, gazes at Polonius, exclaiming,

"Thus bad begins, and worse remains behind."

After the third act Hamlet is but half his former self. The actor would willingly stop short, leaving the last two acts to the imagination, and in the present condition of stock companies the critic would gladly assent to curtailment; but it must be five acts or nothing, and patience endures to the last. Fechter's treatment of the King in the fourth act is that of undisguised contempt. "If your messenger find him (Polonius) not there (in heav-

en,) seek him in the other place *yourself*"; and you see that if Hamlet were not guarded, he would then and there send the King to "the other place" in search of his courtier.

When Fechter produces Hamlet in his own theatre, the time of the churchyard scene is that of a brilliant sunset, making a fine contrast between the thoughtless joy of Nature and the grief of humanity. Moreover, it is neither customary nor practicable to dig graves by the fickle light of the moon feebly assisted by one small lantern; and when truth is compatible with art,—for my part I believe the two walk hand in hand,—it should be adhered to. Fechter's apostrophe to *poor* Yorick is singularly tender: "Here hung those lips that I have kissed I know not how oft"; and Fechter carries the skull almost to his lips, when he puts it away with a shiver. From time immemorial Ophelia's body has been borne from *church* to churchyard, when the text tells us that her burial in sanctified ground is granted under protest.

"She is allowed her virgin crants,
Her maiden strewments, and the bringing home,
Of bell and burial.

We should profane the service of the dead,
To sing a requiem, and such rest to her
As to peace-parted souls."

Hence Fechter causes Ophelia to be brought through the churchyard gateway, and the officiating priest wears none of the insignia of his office, the gown excepted.

"What, the fair *Ophelia*?"

and, overwhelmed with agony, Hamlet falls on his knees beside a tomb and buries his head in his hands. In the controversy between Hamlet and Laertes, Macready and Kemble leaped into the grave, and there went through the grappling in true Punch and Judy fashion. The illustrious example has been often followed; but Fechter wisely abstains from the absurdity, not approaching the grave until his last word is spoken, when, gazing in agony at the gaping void and at Ophelia's corse, he is dragged off the stage by Horatio.

In the art of fencing Fechter is con-

summate; consequently the final scene is full of spirit and interest. His arrangement of the stage is likewise admirable. In the background runs a gallery, to which a short flight of stairs leads on each side of the stage, and by which all exits and entrances are made. To the left stands the throne where sits the King. The moment Hamlet exclaims,

"Ho! let the door be locked:
Treachery! seek it out,"

the King exhibits signs of fear; and while Laertes makes his terrible confession, he steals to the opposite stairs, shielding himself from Hamlet's observation behind the group of courtiers, who, paralyzed with horror, fail to remark the action. Laertes no sooner utters the words, "The King's to blame," than Hamlet turns suddenly to the throne in search of his victim; discovering the ruse, he rushes up the left-hand stairs, meets the King in the centre of the gallery, and stabs him. It would be difficult to conceive a more effective manner of dispatching Claudius, or one more in harmony with good taste. He is not butchered as in the old "business," and the stage is relieved of one dead body. Descending, the potent poison steals upon Hamlet, who murmuring, "The rest is silence," falls dead on the corpse of Laertes, thus showing his forgiveness of treachery and remembrance of Ophelia. There is no contortion in Fechter's manner of dying. Edmund Kean was no doubt right in illustrating a death by poison; but if Hamlet dies thus, surely Laertes must meet his doom in like manner. Two such exhibitions would be beyond human endurance, and, as Laertes dies first, Hamlet's effects would be lost. Therefore Fechter is not without reason in abstaining from literalness.

Does not the photograph, dim as it is, show Fechter's power in Hamlet? Does it not give evidence of ideas and ideality.

The fair hair of Fechter's Hamlet is not an original idea, though from the criticism one might imagine as much.

Goethe declares that, "as a Dane, as a Northman, he is fair-haired and blue-eyed by descent." "Absurd!" cries a voice; "how is this possible when we are distinctly told that his father's hair is 'sable silvered'?" Does it follow that Hamlet the younger must therefore be dark-haired? To my way of thinking, Fechter gives us the ideal Hamlet, who with all his manly beauty "is fat and scant of breath." "Brown-complexioned people in their youth are seldom plump," argues Goethe. Fechter is thoroughly manly, as Hamlet, who is much given to exercise, should be. No contrary opinion can take comfort in Hamlet's declaration that Claudius is no more like his father than he to Hercules, for Hercules performed such feats of prowess as astounded both gods and men. He is robust without being unpleasantly so, he is graceful, he is supple as an athlete, he is courtly, he is wondrously picturesque, and his beautiful flaxen wig so transforms his coloring that his dark hazel eyes are mistaken for blue!

There has been something said of Fechter's liberties with Shakespeare's language. Curious to know how much truth lay in this accusation, I have followed him while acting with book in hand. Fechter spoke no more than is set down to him, — nor less. He was what is called, in stage parlance, "letter perfect." There were a few trips of accent, — very few, — made with the lips entirely; for when the offending passages were afterwards shown to Fechter, he spoke them correctly, showing that the head had not been at fault. And here lies the secret of the charge, that Fechter has no settled convictions as to the reading of Hamlet. Rarely repeating the *same* error, he supplements it with another, as, for example,

"O horrible, horrible, most horrible!"

intending *most* horrible, and so delivering the passage on the following performance. These are slight blemishes to weigh against a beautiful work of art.

"When reason yields to passion's wild alarms,
And the whole state of man is up in arms,

What but a critic would condemn the player
For pausing here, when cool sense pauses there?
Whilst working from the heart, the fire I trace,
And mark it strongly flaming to the face;
Whilst in each sound I hear the very man
I can't catch words, and pity those who can."

Nor is there much more foundation for the accusation of "cutting" Shakespeare. No actor has ever spoken the whole of Hamlet. Betterton took many liberties, and what Garrick did finally shall be referred to. When performing this character in Dublin, an Irish critic suggested the advisability of his leaving out Hamlet's "abominable" soliloquy while the King is at prayers. Garrick carried out the suggestion, and it has never been restored by any English actor. Fechter's version is that of Kemble and of the stage. If, in the last act, he does not always deliver the frenzied speech addressed to Laertes, it is because of exceptional circumstances.

Whether there ever lived a thoroughly satisfactory Hamlet is extremely doubtful. What Burbage was nobody knows. What Betterton made of the character it is possible to conceive; for with all Cibber's praise of this actor, Quin owned that he "would not go down in Garrick's days," and as Quin himself, grounded on Booth's and Betterton's school, died artistically as soon as Garrick's genius illuminated the English stage, the critic has very grave doubts as to any standard set up by Cibber, who showed his bad taste by cordially hating Garrick's acting. Then as to Garrick's Hamlet, it comes in "questionable shape"; for though the great little man was the first to produce the play in 1742, shorn of every objectionable word and the traditional music, he gave the address to the players like a pedagogue, walked backward and forward, twirling a white *handkerchief*, while exclaiming,

"Some must laugh, while some must weep,"

and performed other antics hardly compatible with Shakespeare's Dane. That he failed to appreciate the character is evident from the manner in which he slaughtered the play thirty years after, when he "improved" Shake-

speare out of sight in the last acts, and contemplated turning the grave-diggers and Osric, "the Danish macaroni," into a farce! Yet this "mass of deformity" held the stage eight years with a Hamlet that exemplified the theory of perpetual motion! Cooke in Hamlet was "one mass of awkward error"; neither does Kemble, nor does the elder Kean, owe his fame to his personation of the character. Knowing this, Fechter acquires additional respect for his rendition of Hamlet.

Possessing good height, small hands and feet, a face so like Garrick's in contour and complexion as in a Garrick wig to render the resemblance astonishing, and so wonderful in expression as, like Talma's, to need but the passing of a hand to transform broad comedy into deepest tragedy; with a large, magnetic, ever-changing hazel eye, with pantomime that rivals Ristori's, with a rich, melodious voice that runs the gamut of the passions with abundant sentiment and humor equally developed, with a sculptor's knowledge of form, a painter's love of costume and color, and a Frenchman's education in the best school of acting, Fechter takes his place among the few great actors of the world. With regard to his pronunciation of English there is really very little fault to be found. In private it rarely occurs to the most careful listeners that Fechter is not, so far as concerns accent, an Englishman. On the stage, however, there are times when, if he does not feel well, his speech becomes thick, or when, if he is carried away by passion, his delivery becomes somewhat indistinct; but this is seldom. Ordinarily

his enunciation is wonderfully distinct, and his English far purer than that spoken by the actors around him. It is somewhat amusing to hear Americans, who are proverbially inelegant in their language, finding fault with Fechter's occasional slips of the tongue. What would they say to Garrick, with his *shupreme*, *shuperior*, *vurtue*, *fersely* (for fiercely), *Isrel* for Israel, *villain* for villain, and appeal for appall? Churchill, in his *Rosciad*, declared that "Garrick never did or never could speak ten successive lines of Shakespeare with grammatical propriety." Nevertheless Garrick was great. What would they say to Kemble's "foggy throat," that was wont to

"Fill all thy bones with achës,"

and whose vitiated orthoepy induced Leigh Hunt to publish a lexicon, that theatre-goers might have a key to the text. Kean (the elder) had countless vulgarisms of pronunciations. Vulgarity is inexcusable; a slight foreign accent may not be desirable, yet it is far more grateful to a musical ear than the common variety of nasal "twang" in which both our pulpit and stage indulge to an intolerable extent.

Writer, as well as sculptor and actor, Fechter is the author of many original French plays to which he has never appended his name, as well as of the several English dramatizations. No mean poet, he has rendered Romeo and Juliet into French verse. In the prime of life, there are still rich possibilities for Fechter as a dramatist and as an interpreter of Shakespeare.

"Hence, to thy praises," Fechter, "I agree,
And pleased with nature, must be pleased with
thee!"

Kate Field.

JOSEPH AND HIS FRIEND.

CHAPTER XXVI.

THE work at Coventry Forge was now so well organized that Philip could easily give the most of his time to Joseph's vindication. He had secured the services of an excellent country lawyer, but he also relied much upon the assistance of two persons, — his sister Madeline and Elwood Withers: Madeline, from her rapid, clear insight, her shrewd interpretation of circumstances; and Elwood as an active, untiring practical agent.

The latter, according to agreement, had ridden up from his section of the railway, and was awaiting Philip when he returned home.

Philip gave them the history of the day, — this time frankly, with all the signs and indications which he had so carefully kept from Joseph's knowledge. Both looked aghast; and Elwood bent an ivory paper-cutter so suddenly in his hands that it snapped in twain. He colored like a girl.

"It serves me right," he said. "Whenever my hands are idle, Satan finds mischief for 'em, — as the spelling-book says. But just so the people bend and twist Joseph Asten's character, and just so unexpectedly his life may snap in their hands!"

"*Dii avertite omen!*" Madeline cried. "Put down the pieces, Mr. Withers! You frighten me."

"No, it is reversed!" said Philip. "Just so Joseph's friends will snap this chain of circumstances. If you begin to be superstitious, I must look out for other aids. The tracing of the poison is a more fortunate step than I hoped, at the start. I cannot at all guess to what it may lead, but there is a point beyond which even the most malignant fate has no further power over an innocent man. Thus far we have met nothing but hostile circumstances: there seems to be more than Chance in the game,

and I have an idea that the finding of this paper will break the evil spell. Come now, Madeline, and you, Withers, give me your guesses as to what my discovery shall be to-morrow!"

After a pause, Madeline answered: "It must have been purchased — perhaps even by Mr. Asten — for rats or mice; and she may have swallowed the drug in a fit of passion."

"I think," said Elwood, "that she bought it for the purpose of poisoning Joseph! Then, may be, the glasses were changed, as I've heard tell of a man whose wife changed his coffee-cup because there was a fly in it, giving him hers, and thereby innocently killed him when he meant to ha' killed her."

"Ha!" Philip cried; "the most incredible things, apparently, are sometimes the most natural! I had not thought of this explanation."

"O Philip!" said Madeline, "that would be a new horror! Pray, let us not think of it: indeed, indeed, we must not guess any more."

Philip strove to put the idea from his mind: he feared lest it might warp his judgment and mislead him in investigations which it required a cool, sharp intellect to prosecute. But the idea would not stay away: it haunted him precisely on account of its enormity, and he rode again to Magnolia the next day with a foreboding sense of some tragic secret about to be revealed.

But he never could have anticipated the actual revelation.

There was no difficulty in finding Ziba Linthicum's drug-store. The proprietor was a lank, thin-faced man, with projecting, near-sighted eyes, and an exceedingly prim, pursed mouth. His words, uttered in the close, wiry twang peculiar to Southern Pennsylvania, seemed to give him a positive relish: one could fancy that his mouth watered slightly as he spoke. His

long, lean lips had a settled smirk at the corner, and his skin was drawn so tightly over his broad, concave chin-bone that it shone, as if polished around the edges.

He was waiting upon a little girl when Philip entered; but he looked up from his scales, bowed, smiled and said: "In a moment, if you please."

Philip leaned upon the glass-case, apparently absorbed in the contemplation of the various soaps and perfumes under his eyes, but thinking only of the paper in his pocket-book.

"Something in this line, perhaps?"

Mr. Linthicum, with a still broader smile, began to enumerate: "These are from the Society Hygiennick—"

"No," said Philip, "my business is especially private. I take it for granted that you have many little confidential matters intrusted to you."

"O, undoubtedly, sir! Quite as much so as a physician."

"You are aware, also, that mistakes sometimes occur in making up prescriptions, or in using them afterwards?"

"Not by *me*, I should hope. I keep a record of every dangerous ingredient which goes out of my hands."

"Ah!" Philip exclaimed. Then he paused, uncertain how much to confide to Mr. Linthicum's discretion. But, on mentioning his name and residence, he found that both himself and Mr. Hopeton were known—and favorably, it seemed—to the apothecary. He knew the class of men to which the latter belonged,—prim, fussy, harmlessly vain persons, yet who take as good care of their consciences as their cravats and shirt-bosoms. He produced the paper without further delay.

"That was bought here, certainly," said Mr. Linthicum. "The word 'Arsenic' is written in my hand. The date when, and the person by whom, it was purchased, must be in my register. Will you go over it with me?"

He took a volume from a drawer, and beginning at the last entry, they went slowly backward over the names, the apothecary saying: "This is con-

fidential; I rely upon your seeing without remembering."

They had not gone back more than two or three weeks before Philip came upon a name that made his heart stand still. There was a record in a single line:

"Miss Henderson. Arsenic."

He waited a few seconds, until he felt sure of his voice. Then he asked: "Do you happen to know Miss Henderson?"

"Not at all! A perfect stranger."

"Can you, perhaps, remember her appearance?"

"Let me see," said Mr. Linthicum, biting the end of his forefinger; "that must have been the veiled lady. The date corresponds. Yes, I feel sure of it, as all the other poison customers are known to me."

"Pray describe her then!" Philip exclaimed.

"Really, I fear that I cannot. Dressed in black, I think; but I will not be positive. A soft, agreeable voice, I am sure."

"Was she alone? Or was any one else present?"

"Now, I *do* recall one thing," the apothecary answered. "There was an agent of a wholesale city firm—a travelling agent, you understand—trying to persuade me into an order on his house. He stepped on one side as she came to the counter, and he perhaps saw her face more distinctly, for he laughed as she left, and said something about a handsome girl putting her lovers out of their misery."

But Mr. Linthicum could remember neither the name of the agent nor that of the firm which he represented. All Philip's questioning elicited no further particulars, and he was obliged to be satisfied with the record of the day and probable hour of the purchase, and with the apothecary's promise of the strictest secrecy.

He rode immediately home, and after a hasty consultation with Madeline, remounted his horse and set out to find Lucy Henderson. He was fortunate enough to meet her on the high-

way, on her way to call upon a neighbor. Springing from his horse he walked beside her, and announced his discovery at once.

Lucy remembered the day when she had accompanied Julia to Magnolia, during Joseph's absence from home. The time of the day, also, corresponded to that given by the apothecary.

"Did you visit the drug-store?" Philip asked.

"No," she answered, "and I did not know that Julia had. I paid two or three visits to acquaintances, while she did her shopping, as she told me."

"Then, try and remember, not only the order of those visits, but the time occupied by each," said Philip. "Write to your friends, and ask them to refresh their memories. It has become an important point, for—the poison was purchased in your name!"

"Impossible!" Lucy cried. She gazed at Philip with such amazement that her innocence was then fixed in his mind, if it had not been so before.

"Yes, I say 'impossible!' too," he answered. "There is only one explanation. Julia Asten gave your name instead of her own, when she purchased it."

"Oh!" Lucy's voice sounded like a hopeless personal protest against the collective falsehood and wickedness of the world.

"I have another chance to reach the truth," said Philip. "I shall find the stranger,—the travelling agent,—if it obliges me to summon every such agent of every wholesale drug house in the city! It is at least a positive fortune that we have made this discovery now."

He looked at his watch. "I have just time to catch the evening train," he said, hurriedly, "but I should like to send a message to Elwood Withers. If you pass through that wood on the right, you will see the track just below you. It is not more than half a mile from here; and you are almost sure to find him at or near the unfinished tunnel. Tell him to see Rachel Miller, and if anything further has been found, to inform my sister Madeline at once.

That is all. I make no apology for imposing the service on you: good by, and keep up your faith, Lucy?"

He pressed her hand, sprang into the saddle, and cantered briskly away.

Lucy, infected by his haste, crossed the field, struggled through the undergrowth of the wild belt of wood, and descended to the railway track, without giving herself time to think. She met a workman near the mouth of the tunnel, and not daring to venture in, sent by him a summons to Elwood. It was not many minutes before he appeared.

"Something has happened, Lucy?" he exclaimed.

"Philip thinks he has made a discovery," she answered, "and I come to you as his messenger." She then repeated Philip's words.

"Is that all?" Elwood asked, scanning her face anxiously. "You do not seem quite like your real self, Lucy."

She sat down upon the bank. "I am out of breath," she said; "I must have walked faster than I thought."

"Wait a minute!" said he. He ran up the track, to where a little side-glen crossed it, sprang down among the bushes, and presently reappeared with a tin cup, full of cold, pure spring water.

The draught seemed to revive her at once. "It is not all, Elwood," she said. "Joseph is not the only one, now, who is implicated by the same circumstances."

"Who else?—not Philip Held!"

"No," she answered, very quietly, "it is a woman. Her name is Lucy Henderson."

Before Elwood could speak, she told him all that she had heard from Philip. He could scarcely bring his mind to accept its truth.

"O, the —" he began; "but, no! I will keep the words to myself. There is something deeper in this than any of us has yet looked for! Depend upon it, Lucy, she had a plan in getting you there!"

Lucy was silent. She fancied she knew Julia's plan already.

"Did she mean to poison Joseph herself, and throw the suspicion on

you? And now by her own death, after all, she accomplishes her chief end! It is a hellish tangle, whichever way I look; but they say that the truth will sooner or later put down any amount of lies, and so it must be, here. We must get at the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth! Do you not say so, Lucy?"

"Yes!" she answered firmly, looking him in the face.

"Ay, though *all* should come to light! We can't tell what it may be necessary to say. They may go to work, and unravel Joseph's life, and yours, and mine, and hold up the stuff for everybody to look at. Well, let 'em! say I. If there are dark streaks in mine, I guess they'll look tolerably fair beside that one black heart. We're here alone, Lucy; there may not be a chance to say it soon again, so I'll say now, that if need comes to publish what I said to you one night a year ago, — to publish it for Joseph's sake, or your sake, — don't keep back a single word! The worst would be, some men or women might think me conceited."

"No, Elwood!" she exclaimed: "that reproach would fall on me! You once offered me your help, and I — I fear I spurned it; but I will take it now. Nay, I beg you to offer it to me again, and I will accept it with gratitude!"

She rose, and stretched out her hand.

Elwood clasped it tenderly, held it a moment, and seemed about to speak. But although his lips parted, and there was a movement of the muscles of his throat, he did not utter a word. In another moment he turned, walked a few yards up the track, and then came back to her.

"No one could mistake you for Julia Asten," he said. "You are at least half a head taller than she was. Your voice is not at all the same: the apothecary will surely notice the difference! Then an *alibi*, as they call it, can be proved."

"So Philip Held thought. But if my friends should not remember the exact time, — what should I then do?"

"Lucy, don't ask yourself the question, now! It seems to me that the case stands this way: one evil woman has made a trap, fallen into it herself, and taken the secret of its make away with her. There is nothing more to be invented, and so we hold all that we gain. While we are mining, where's the counter-mining to come from? Who is to lie us out of our truth? There is n't much to stand on yet, I grant; but another step — the least little thing — may give us all the ground we want!"

He spoke so firmly and cheerily, that Lucy's despondent feeling was charmed away. Besides, nothing could have touched her more than Elwood's heroic self-control. After the miserable revelation which Philip had made, it was unspeakably refreshing to be brought into contact with a nature so sound and sweet and strong. When he had led her by an easier path up the hill, and they had parted at the end of the lane leading to her father's house, she felt, as never before, the comfort of relying so wholly on a faithful man friend.

Elwood took his horse and rode to the Asten farm. Joseph's face brightened at his appearance, and they talked, as of old, avoiding the dark year that lay between their past intimacy and its revival. As in Philip's case, it was difficult to communicate secretly with Rachel Miller; but Elwood, with great patience, succeeded in looking his wish to speak with her, and uniting her efforts with his own. She adroitly turned the conversation upon a geological work which Joseph had been reading.

"I've been looking into the subject myself," Elwood said. "Would you let me see the book: it may be the thing I want."

"It is on the book-shelf in your bedroom, Joseph," Rachel remarked.

There was time enough for Elwood to declare his business, and for Rachel to answer: "Mr. Held said every scrap, and it *is* but a scrap, with half a name on it. I found it behind and mostly under the lower drawer in the same

box. I'll get it before you leave, and give it to you when we shake hands. Be careful, for he may make something out of it, after all. Tell him there is n't a stitch in a dress but I've examined, and a mortal work it was!"

It was late before Elwood could leave; nevertheless, he rode to Coventry Forge. The scrap of paper had been successfully transferred, and his pressing duty was to deliver it into the hands of Madeline Held. He found her anxiously waiting, in accordance with Philip's instructions.

When they looked at the paper, it seemed, truly, to be a worthless fragment. It had the character, also, of an apothecary's label, but the only letters remaining were those forming the end of the name, apparently—*ers*, and a short distance under them—*Sts*.

"'Behind and mostly under the lower drawer' of her jewel-case," said Madeline, musingly. "I think I might guess how it came there. She had seen the label, which had probably been forgotten, and then, as she supposed, had snatched it away and destroyed it, without noticing that this piece, caught behind the drawer, had been torn off. But there is no evidence—and perhaps none can be had—that the paper contained poison."

"Can you make anything out of the letters?" Elwood asked.

"The '*Sts*' certainly means 'Streets'—now, I see! It is a corner house! This makes the place a little more easy to be identified. If Philip cannot find it, I am sure a detective can. I will write to him at once."

"Then I'll wait and ride to the office with the letter," said Elwood.

Madeline rose, and commenced walking up and down the room: she appeared to be suddenly and unusually excited.

"I have a new suspicion," she said, at last. "Perhaps I am in too much of a hurry to make conjectures, because Philip thinks I have a talent for it,—and yet, this grows upon me every minute! I hope—oh, I hope I am right!"

She spoke with so much energy that Elwood began to share her excitement without knowing its cause. She noticed the eager, waiting expression of his face.

"You must really pardon me, Mr. Withers. I believe I was talking to myself rather than to you; I will not mention my fancy until Philip decides whether it is worth acting upon. There will be no harm if each of us finds a different clew, and follows it. Philip will hardly leave the city to-morrow. I shall not write, but go down with the first train in the morning!"

Elwood took his leave, feeling hopeful, and yet very restless.

It was a long while before Madeline encountered Philip. He was busily employed in carrying out his plan of tracing the travelling agent,—not yet successful, but sanguine of success. He examined the scrap of paper which Madeline brought, listened to her reasons for the new suspicion which had crossed her mind, and compared them with the little evidence already collected.

"Do not let us depend too seriously on this," he then said; "there is about an even chance that you are right. We will keep it as an additional and independent test, but we dare not lose sight of the fact that the law will assume Joseph's guilt, and we must establish his innocence, first of all. Nay, if we can simply prove that Julia, and not Lucy, purchased the poison, we shall save both! But, at the same time, I will try to find this—*ers*, who lives in a corner-house, and I will have a talk with old Blessing this very evening."

"Why not go now?"

"Patience, you impetuous girl! I mean to take no step without working out every possible result, in advance. If I were not here, in the city, I would consult with Mr. Pinkerton, before proceeding further. Now I shall take you to the train: you must return to Coventry, and watch and wait there."

When Philip called at the Blessing mansion, in the evening, he found only

Mrs. Blessing at home. She was rigid and dreary in her mourning, and her reception of him was almost repellent in its stiff formality.

"Mr. Blessing is absent," she explained, inviting Philip to a seat by a wave of her hand. "His own interests rendered a trip to the Oil Regions imperative; it is a mental distraction which I do not grudge him. This is a cheerless household, sir, — one daughter gone forever, and another about to leave us. How does Mr. Asten bear his loss?"

Philip, thereupon, as briefly and forcibly as possible, related all that had occurred. "I wished to consult Mr. Blessing," he concluded, "in relation to the possibility of his being able to furnish any testimony on his son-in-law's side. Perhaps you, also —"

"No!" she interrupted. "I know nothing whatever! If the trial (which I think most unnecessary and shocking) gets into the city papers, it will be a terrible scandal for us. When will it come on, did you say?"

"In two or three weeks."

"There will be barely time!" she cried.

"For that reason," said he, "I wish to secure the evidence at once. All the preparations for the defence must be completed within that time."

"Clementina," Mrs. Blessing continued, without heeding his words, "will be married about the first of October. Mr. Spelter has been desirous of making a bridal tour to Europe. She did not favor the plan; but it seems to me like an interposition of Heaven!"

Philip rose, too disgusted to speak. He bowed in silence, and left the house.

CHAPTER XXVII. }

As the day of trial drew nigh, the anxiety and activity of Joseph's friends increased, so that even the quiet atmosphere wherein he lived was disturbed by it. He could not help knowing that they were engaged in

collecting evidence, but inasmuch as Philip always said, "You can do nothing!" he forced himself to wait with such patience as was possible. Rachel Miller, who had partly taken the hired man, Dennis, into her confidence, hermetically sealed the house to the gossip of the neighborhood; but her greatest triumph was in concealing her alarm, as the days rolled by and the mystery was not yet unravelled.

There was not much division of opinion in the neighborhood, however. The growing discord between husband and wife had not been generally remarked: they were looked upon as a loving and satisfied couple. Joseph's integrity of character was acknowledged, and, even had it been doubted, the people saw no motive for crime. His action in demanding a legal investigation also operated favorably upon public opinion. Even Mr. Chaffinch, with all his belief in the natural depravity of the human heart, and his experience of Joseph's hardness to conviction, was forced, in his own mind, to speak him free of the charge. Had he known all the circumstances, which Philip had detected, and was trying to conceal until he could present them with their explanation, he might have thought differently, and many of the neighbors with him.

The quiet and seclusion were beneficial to Joseph. His mind became calmer and clearer; he was able to survey the past without passion, and to contemplate his own faults with a sense of wholesome bitterness rather than pain. The approaching trial was not a pleasant thing to anticipate, but the worst which he foresaw was the probability of so much of his private life being laid bare to the world. Here, again, his own words returned to condemn him. Had he not said to Lucy, on the morning of that fatal day, "I am sick of masks!" Had he not threatened to follow Julia with his own miserable story? The system of checks which restrain impulse, and the whirl of currents and counter-currents which

govern a man's movement through life, began to arrange themselves in his mind. True wisdom, he now felt, lay in understanding these, and so employing them as to reach individual liberty of action through law and not outside of it. He had been shallow and reckless, even in his good impulses: it was now time to endure quietly for a season what their effect had been.

The day previous to the trial Philip had a long consultation with Mr. Pinkerton. He had been so far successful that the name and whereabouts of the travelling agent had been discovered: the latter had been summoned, but he could not possibly arrive before the next day. Philip had also seen Mr. Blessing, who entered with great readiness into his plans, promised his assistance in ascertaining the truth of Madeline's suspicion, and would give his testimony as soon as he could return from New York, whither he had gone to say farewell to Mrs. Clementina Spelter, before her departure for Paris on a bridal journey. These were the two principal witnesses for the defence, and it was yet uncertain what kind of testimony they would be able to give.

"We must finish the other witnesses," Mr. Pinkerton said, "(who, in spite of all we can do, will strengthen the prosecution), by the time you reach here. If Spenham gives us trouble, as I am inclined to suspect, we cannot well spare you the first day, but I suppose it cannot be helped."

"I will send a telegram to Blessing, in New York, to make sure," Philip answered. "Byle and Glanders answer for their agent, and I can try him with the photograph on the way out. If that succeeds, Blessing's failure will be of less consequence."

"If, only, they do not reach Linthicum in the mean time! I will prolong the impanelling of the jury, and use every other liberty of delay allowed me; yet I have to be cautious. This is Spenham's first important case, and he is ambitious to make capital."

Mr. Spenham was the prosecuting

attorney, who had just been elected to his first term of service in that capacity. He had some shrewdness as a criminal lawyer, and a great deal of experience of the subterranean channels of party politics. This latter acquirement, in fact, was the secret of his election, for he was known to be coarse, unscrupulous, and offensive. Mr. Pinkerton was able to foresee his probable line of attack, and was especially anxious, for that reason, to introduce testimony which would shorten the trial.

When the hour came, and Joseph found that Philip was inevitably absent, the strength he had summoned to his heart seemed to waver for an instant. All his other friends were present, however: Lucy Henderson and Madeline came with the Hopetons, and Elwood Withers stood by his side so boldly and proudly that he soon recovered his composure.

The court-room was crowded, not only by the idlers of the town, but also many neighbors from the country. They were grave and silent, and Joseph's appearance in the place allotted to the accused seemed to impress them painfully. The preliminaries occupied some time, and it was nearly noon before the first witness was called.

This was the physician. He stated, in a clear, business-like manner, the condition in which he found Julia, his discovery of the poison, and the unusual character of its operation, adding his opinion that the latter was owing to a long-continued nervous tension, culminating in hysterical excitement. Mr. Spenham questioned him very closely as to Joseph's demeanor, and his expressions before and after the death. The point of attack which he selected was Julia's exclamation: "Joseph, I will try to be different, but I must live for that!"

"These words," he said, "indicate a previous threat on the part of the accused. His helpless victim—"

Mr. Pinkerton protested against the epithet. But his antagonist found numberless ways of seeming to take

Joseph's guilt for granted, and thus gradually to mould the pliant minds of a not very intelligent jury. The physician was subjected to a rigid cross-examination, in the course of which he was led to state that he, himself, had first advised that the fact of the poisoning should not be mentioned until after the funeral. The onus of the secrecy was thus removed from Joseph, and this was a point gained.

The next witness was the servant-woman, who had been present in the hall when Julia fell upon the landing of the staircase. She had heard the words, "Go away! you have killed me!" spoken in a shrill, excited voice. She had already guessed that something was wrong between the two. Mr. Asten came home, looking quite wild and strange; he did n't seem to speak in his usual voice; he walked about in a restless way, and then went into the garden. Miss Lucy followed him and then Mrs. Asten; but in a little while *she* came back, with her dress torn and her arms scratched; she, the witness, noticed this as Mrs. Asten passed through the hall, tottering as she went and with her fists shut tight. Then Mr. Asten went up stairs to her bedroom; heard them speaking, but not the words; said to Sally, who was in the kitchen, 'It's a real tiff and no mistake,' and Sally remarked, 'They're not used to each other yet, as they will be in a year or two.' "

The witness was with difficulty kept to a direct narrative. She had told the tale so often that every particular had its fixed phrases of description, and all the questioning on both sides called forth only repetitions. Joseph listened with a calm, patient air; nothing had yet occurred for which he was not prepared. The spectators, however, began to be deeply interested, and a sharp observer might have noticed that they were already taking sides.

Mr. Pinkerton soon detected that, although the woman's statements told against Joseph, she possessed no friendly feeling for Julia. He endeavored to

make the most of this; but it was not much.

When Lucy Henderson's name was called, there was a stir of curiosity in the audience. They knew that the conference in the garden, from which Julia had returned in such an excited condition, must now be described. Mr. Spenham pricked up his red ears, ran his hand through his stubby hair, and prepared himself for battle; while Mr. Pinkerton, already in possession of all the facts, felt concerned only regarding the manner in which Lucy might give them. This was a case where so much depended on the impression produced by the individual!

By the time Lucy was sworn she appeared to be entirely composed; her face was slightly pale, but calm, and her voice steady. Mrs. Hopeton and Madeline Held sat near her, and Elwood Withers, leaning against a high railing, was nearly opposite.

There was profound silence as she began, and the interest increased as she approached the time of Joseph's return. She described his appearance, repeated the words she had heard, reproduced the scene in her own chamber, and so came, step by step, to the interview in the garden. The trying nature of her task now became evident. She spoke slowly, and with longer pauses; but whichever way she turned, in her thought, the inexorable necessity of the whole truth stared her in the face.

"Must I repeat everything?" she asked. "I am not sure of recollecting the words precisely as they were spoken."

"You can certainly give the substance," said Mr. Spenham. "And be careful that you omit nothing: you are on your oath, and you ought to know what that means."

His words were loud and harsh. Lucy looked at the impassive face of the judge, at Elwood's earnest features, at the attentive jurymen, and went on.

When she came to Joseph's expression of the love that might have been possible she gave also his words:

"Had there been, I should have darkened the life of a friend."

"Ha!" exclaimed Mr. Spenham, "we are coming upon the motive of the murder."

Again Mr. Pinkerton protested, and was sustained by the court.

"Tell the jury," said Mr. Spenham, "whether there had been any interchange of such expressions between you and the accused previous to his marriage?"

This question was objected to, but the objection was overruled.

"None whatever!" was the answer.

Julia's sudden appearance, the accusation she made, and the manner in which Joseph met it, seemed to turn the current of sympathy the other way. Lucy's recollection of this scene was very clear and complete: had she wished it, she could not have forgotten a word or a look. In spite of Mr. Spenham's angry objections, she was allowed to go on and relate the conversation between Joseph and herself after Julia's return to the house. Mr. Pinkerton made the best use of this portion of the evidence, and it seemed that his side was strengthened, in spite of all unfavorable appearances.

"This is not all!" exclaimed the prosecuting attorney. "A married man does not make a declaration of love—"

"Of a past *possible* love," Mr. Pinkerton interrupted.

"A very fine hair-splitting indeed! A 'possible' love and a 'possible' return, followed by a 'possible' murder and a 'possible' remarriage! Our duty is to remove possibilities and establish facts. The question is, Was there no previous affection between the witness and the accused? This is necessary to prove a motive. I ask then the woman—I beg pardon, the lady—what were her sentiments towards the husband of the poisoned before his marriage, at the time of the conversation in the garden, and now?"

Lucy started, and could not answer. Mr. Pinkerton came to her aid. He protested strongly against such a question, though he felt that there was equal

danger in answering it or leaving it unanswered. A portion of the spectators, sympathizing with Lucy, felt indignant at Mr. Spenham's demand; another portion, hungry for the most private and intimate knowledge of all the parties concerned, eagerly hoped that it would be acceded to.

Lucy half turned, so that she caught a glimpse of Joseph. He was calm, but his eyes expressed a sympathetic trouble. Then she felt her gaze drawn to Elwood, who had become a shade paler, and who met her eyes with a deep, inscrutable expression. Was he thinking of his recent words to her,—
"If need comes to publish what I said to you, don't keep back a single word!"
She felt sure of it, for all that he said was in her mind. Her decision was made: for truth's sake, and under the eye of God, she would speak. Having so resolved, she shut her mind to all else, for she needed the greatest strength of either woman or man.

The judge had decided that she was not obliged to answer the question. There was a murmur, here and there, among the spectators.

"Then I will use my freedom of choice," said Lucy, in a firm voice, "and answer it."

She kept her eyes on Elwood as she spoke, and compelled him to face her. She seemed to forget judge, jury, and the curious public, and to speak only to his ear.

"I am here to tell the whole truth, God helping me," she said. "I do not know how what I am required to say can touch the question of Joseph Astens's guilt or innocence; but I cannot pause to consider that. It is not easy for a woman to lay bare her secret heart to the world; I would like to think that every man who hears me has a wife, a sister, or a beloved girl of his choice, and that he will try to understand my heart through his knowledge of hers. I *did* cherish a tenderness which might have been love—I cannot tell—for Joseph Astens before his betrothal. I admit that his marriage was a grief to me at the time, for,

while I had not suffered myself to feel any hope, I could not keep the feeling of disappointment out of my heart. It was both my blame and shame: I wrestled with it, and with God's help I overcame it!"

There was a simple pathos in Lucy's voice, which pierced directly to the hearts of her hearers. She stood before them, as pure as Godiva in her helpful nakedness. She saw on Elwood's cheek the blush which did not visit hers, and the sparkle of an unconscious tear. Joseph had hidden his face in his hands for a moment, but now looked up with a sadness which no man there could misinterpret.

Lucy had paused, as if waiting to be questioned, but the effect of her words had been so powerful and unexpected that Mr. Spenham was not quite ready. She went on:—

"When I say that I overcame it, I think I have answered everything. I went to him in the garden against my own wish, because his wife begged me with tears and sobs to intercede for her: I could not guess that he had ever thought of me otherwise than as a friend. I attributed his expressions to his disappointment in marriage, and pardoned him when he asked me to forget them—"

"O, no doubt!" Mr. Spenham interrupted, looking at the jury; "after all we have heard, they could not have been very disagreeable!"

Elwood made a rapid step forward; then, recollecting himself, resumed his position against the railing. Very few persons noticed the movement.

"They were very unwelcome," Lucy replied: "under any other circumstances, it would not have been easy to forgive them."

"And this former—'tenderness,' I think you called it," Mr. Spenham persisted,—"do you mean to say that you feel nothing of it at present?"

There was a murmur of indignation all over the room. If there is anything utterly incomprehensible to a vulgar nature, it is the natural delicacy of feeling towards women, which is rarely

wanting even to the roughest and most ignorant men. The prosecution had damaged itself, and now the popular sympathy was wholly and strongly with Lucy.

"I have already answered that question," she said. "For the holy sake of truth, and of my own free will, I have opened my heart. I did it, believing that a woman's first affection is pure, and would be respected; I did it, hoping that it might serve the cause of an innocent man: but now, since it has brought upon me doubt and insult, I shall avail myself of the liberty granted to me by the judge, and speak no word more!"

The spectators broke into applause, which the judge did not immediately check. Lucy's strength suddenly left her; she dropped into her seat and burst into tears.

"I have no further question to ask the witness," said Mr. Pinkerton.

Mr. Spenham inwardly cursed himself for his blunder,—not for his vulgarity, for of that he was sublimely unconscious,—and was only too ready to be relieved from Lucy's presence.

She rose to leave the court, Mrs. Hopeton accompanying her; but Elwood Withers was already at her side, and she leaned upon his arm as they passed through the crowd. The people fell back to make a way, and not a few whispered some honest word of encouragement. Elwood breathed heavily, and the veins on his forehead were swollen.

"Not a word was spoken until they reached the hotel. Then Lucy, taking Elwood's hand, said: 'Thank you, true, dear friend! I can say no more now. Go back, for Joseph's sake, and when the day is over come here and tell me, if you can, that I have not injured him in trying to help him.'"

When Elwood returned to the courtroom, Rachel Miller was on the witness stand. Her testimony confirmed the interpretation of Julia's character which had been suggested by Lucy Henderson's. The sweet, amiable, suffering wife began to recede into the

background, and the cold, false, selfish wife to take her place.

All Mr. Spenham's cross-examination failed to give the prosecution any support until he asked the question:—

"Have you discovered nothing whatever, since your return to the house, which will throw any light upon Mrs. Asten's death?"

Mr. Pinkerton, Elwood, and Madeline all felt that the critical moment had come. Philip's absence threatened to be a serious misfortune.

"Yes," Rachel Miller answered.

"Ah!" exclaimed the prosecuting attorney, rubbing his hair; "what was it?"

"The paper in which the arsenic was put up."

"Will you produce that paper?" he eagerly asked.

"I cannot, now," said Rachel; "I gave it to Mr. Philip Held, so that he might find out something more."

Joseph listened with a keen, undisguised interest. After the first feeling of surprise that such an important event had been kept from his knowledge, his confidence in Philip's judgment reassured him.

"Has Mr. Philip Held destroyed that paper?" Mr. Spenham asked.

"He retains it, and will produce it before this court to-morrow," Mr. Pinkerton replied.

"Was there any mark, or label, upon it, which indicated the place where the poison had been procured?"

"Yes," said Rachel Miller.

"State what it was."

"Ziba Linthicum's drug-store, No. 77 Main Street, Magnolia," she replied, as if the label were before her eyes.

"Let Ziba Linthicum be summoned at once!" Mr. Spenham cried.

Mr. Pinkerton, however, arose and stated that the apothecary's testimony required that of another person who was present when the poison was purchased. This other person had been absent in a distant part of the country, but had been summoned, and would arrive, in company with Mr. Philip

Held, on the following morning. He begged that Mr. Linthicum's evidence might be postponed until then, when he believed that the mystery attending the poisoning would be wholly explained.

Mr. Spenham violently objected, but he again made the mistake of speaking for nearly half an hour on the subject,—an indiscretion into which he was led by his confirmed political habits. By the time the question was decided, and in favor of the defence, the afternoon was well advanced, and the court adjourned until the next day.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

ELWOOD accompanied Joseph to the prison, where he was obliged to spend the night, and was allowed to remain with him until Mr. Pinkerton (who was endeavoring to reach Philip by telegraph) should arrive.

Owing to Rachel Miller's forethought, the bare room was sufficiently furnished. There was a clean bed, a chair or two, and a table upon which stood a basket of provisions.

"I suppose I must eat," said Joseph, "as a matter of duty. If you will sit down and join me, Elwood, I will try."

"If I could have that fellow, Spenham, by the throat, for a minute," Elwood growled, "it would give me a good appetite. But I will take my share, as it is: I never can think rightly, when I'm hungry. Why, there is enough for a picnic! sandwiches, cold chicken, pickles, cakes, cheese, and two bottles of coffee, as I live! Just think that we're in a hotel, Joseph! It's all in one's notion, leastways for a single night; for you can go where you like to-morrow!"

"I hope so," said Joseph, as he took his seat. Elwood set the provisions before him, but he did not touch them. After a moment of hesitation, he stretched out his hand and laid it on Elwood's shoulder.

"Now, old boy!" Elwood cried: "I know it. What you mean is unnecessary, and I won't have it!"

"Let me speak!"

"I don't see why I should, Joseph. It's no more than I guessed. She did n't love me: you were tolerably near together once, and if you should now come nearer —"

But he could not finish the sentence: the words stuck in his throat.

"Great Heaven!" Joseph exclaimed, starting to his feet; "what are you thinking of? Don't you see that Lucy Henderson and I are parted forever by what has happened to-day? Did n't you hear her say that she overcame the tenderness which might have become love, as I overcame mine for her? Neither of us can recall that first feeling, any more than we can set our lives again in the past. I shall worship her as one of the purest and noblest souls that breathe; but, love her? make her my wife? It could never, never be! No, Elwood! I was wondering whether you could pardon me the rashness which has exposed her to to-day's trial."

Elwood began to laugh strangely. "You are foolish, Joseph," he said. "Pshaw! I can't hold my knife. These sudden downs and then ups are too much for a fellow! Pardon you? Yes, on one condition, — that you empty your plate before you speak another word to me!"

They were both cheerful after this, and the narrow little room seemed freer and brighter to their eyes. It was late before Mr. Pinkerton arrived: he had waited in vain for an answer from Philip. Elwood's presence was a relief to him, for he did not wish to excite Joseph by a statement of what he expected to prove, unless the two witnesses had been really secured. He adroitly managed, however, to say very little while seeming to say a great deal, and Joseph was then left to such rest as his busy memory might allow him.

Next morning there was an even greater crowd in the court-room. All Joseph's friends were there, with the exception of Lucy Henderson, who, by Mr. Pinkerton's advice, remained at the hotel. Philip had not arrived, but

had sent a message saying that all was well, and he would come in the morning train.

Mr. Spenham, the evening before, had ascertained the nature of Mr. Linthicum's evidence. The apothecary, however, was only able to inform him of Philip's desire to discover the travelling agent, without knowing his purpose. In the name recorded as that of the purchaser of the poison Mr. Spenham saw a weapon which would enable him to repay Lucy for his discomfiture, and to indicate, if not prove, a complicity of crime, in which Philip Held also, he suspected, might be concerned.

The court opened at nine o'clock, and Philip could not be on hand before ten. Mr. Pinkerton endeavored to procure the examination of Dennis, and another subordinate witness, before the apothecary; but he only succeeded in gaining fifteen minutes' time by the discussion. Mr. Ziba Linthicum was then called and sworn. He carried a volume under his arm.

As Philip possessed the label, Mr. Linthicum could only testify to the fact that a veiled lady had purchased so many grains of arsenic of him on a certain day; that he kept a record of all sales of dangerous drugs; and that the lady's name was recorded in the book which he had brought with him. He then read the entry: —

"Miss Henderson. Arsenic."

Although Mr. Pinkerton had whispered to Joseph, "Do not be startled when he reads the name!" it was all the latter could do to suppress an exclamation. There was a murmur and movement through the whole court.

"We have now both the motive and the co-agent of the crime," said Mr. Spenham, rising triumphantly. "After the evidence which was elicited yesterday, it will not be difficult to connect the two. If the case deepens in enormity as it advances, we may be shocked, but we have no reason to be surprised. The growth of free-love sentiments, among those who tear themselves loose from the guidance of religious influences, naturally leads to crime; and

the extent to which this evil has been secretly developed is not suspected by the public. Testimony can be adduced to show that the accused, Joseph Asten, has openly expressed his infidelity; that he repelled with threats and defiance a worthy minister of the Gospel, whom his own pious, murdered wife had commissioned to lead him into the true path. The very expression which the woman Lucy Henderson testified to his having used in the garden, — ‘I am sick of masks,’ — what does it mean? What but unrestrained freedom of the passions, — the very foundation upon which the free-lovers build up their pernicious theories? The accused cannot complain if the law lifts the mask from his countenance, and shows his nature in all its hideous deformity. But another mask, also, must be raised: I demand the arrest of the woman, Lucy Henderson!”

Mr. Pinkerton sprang to his feet. In a measured, solemn voice, which contrasted strongly with the loud, sharp tones of the prosecuting attorney, he stated that Mr. Linthicum’s evidence was already known to him; that it required an explanation which would now be given in a few minutes, and which would completely exonerate Miss Henderson from the suspicion of having purchased the poison, or even having any knowledge of its purchase. He demanded that no conclusion should be drawn from evidence which would mislead the minds of the jury: he charged the prosecuting attorney with most unjustly assailing the characters of both Joseph Asten and Lucy Henderson, and invoked, in the name of impartial justice, the protection of the court.

He spoke both eloquently and earnestly; but the spectators noticed that he looked at his watch from minute to minute. Mr. Spenham interrupted him, but he continued to repeat his statements, until there came a sudden movement in the crowd, near the outer door of the hall. Then he sat down.

Philip led the way, pressing the crowd to right and left in his eager-

ness. He was followed by a tall young man, with a dark mustache and an abundance of jewelry, while Mr. Benjamin Blessing, flushed and perspiring, brought up the rear. The spectators were almost breathless in their hushed, excited interest.

Philip seized Joseph’s hand, and bending nearer, whispered, “You are free!” His eyes sparkled and his face glowed.

Room was made for the three witnesses, and after a brief, whispered consultation between Philip and Mr. Pinkerton, Elwood was despatched to bring Lucy Henderson to the court.

“May it please the court,” said Mr. Pinkerton, “I am now able to fulfil that promise which I this moment made. The evidence which was necessary to set forth the manner of Mrs. Asten’s death, and which will release the court from any further consideration of the present case, is in my hands. I therefore ask leave to introduce this evidence without any further delay.”

After a little discussion the permission was granted, and Philip Held was placed upon the stand.

He first described Joseph’s genuine sorrow at his wife’s death and his self-accusation of having hastened it by his harsh words to her in the morning. He related the interview at which Joseph, in learning of the reports concerning him, had immediately decided to ask for a legal investigation, and in a simple, straightforward way, narrated all that had been done up to the time of consulting Ziba Linthicum’s poison record.

“As I knew it to be quite impossible that Miss Lucy Henderson could have been the purchaser,” he began —

Mr. Spenham instantly objected, and the expression was ruled out by the court.

“Then,” Philip resumed, “I determined to ascertain who had purchased the arsenic. Mr. Linthicum’s description of the lady was too vague to be recognized. It was necessary to identify the travelling agent who was present; for this purpose I went to the

city, ascertained the names and addresses of all the travelling agents of all the wholesale drug firms, and after much time and correspondence discovered the man, — Mr. Case, who is here present. He was in Persepolis, Iowa, when the summons reached him, and would have been here yesterday but for an accident on the Erie Railway.

"In the mean time I had received the small fragment of another label, and by the clew which the few letters gave me I finally identified the place as the drug-store of Wallis and Erkers, at the corner of Fifth and Persimmon Streets. There was nothing left by which the nature of the drug could be ascertained, and therefore this movement led to nothing which could be offered as evidence in this court, — that is, by the druggists themselves, and they have not been summoned. It happened, however, by a coincidence which only came to light this morning, that —"

Here Philip was again interrupted. His further testimony was of less consequence. He was sharply cross-examined by Mr. Spenham as to his relations with Joseph, and his object in devoting so much time to procuring evidence for the defence; but he took occasion, in replying, to express his appreciation of Joseph's character so emphatically, that the prosecution lost rather than gained. Then the plan of attack was changed. He was asked whether he believed in the Bible, in future rewards and punishments, in the views of the so-called free-lovers, in facile divorce and polygamy. He was too shrewd, however, to lay himself open to the least misrepresentation, and the moral and mental torture which our jurisprudence has substituted for the rack, thumb-screws, and Spanish boots of the Middle Ages finally came to an end.

Then the tall young man, conscious of his own elegance, took his place. He gave his name and occupation as Augustus Fitzwilliam Case, commercial traveller for the house of Byle and Glanders, wholesale druggists.

"State whether you were in the drug-store of Ziba Linthicum, No. 77 Main Street, in this town, on the day of the entry in Mr. Linthicum's book."

"I was."

"Did you notice the person who called for arsenic?"

"I did."

"What led you specially to notice her?"

"It is my habit," said the witness. "I am impressible to beauty, and I saw at once that the lady had what I call — style. I recollect thinking, 'More style than could be expected in these little places.'"

"Keep your thoughts to yourself!" cried Mr. Spenham.

"Describe the lady as correctly as you can," said Mr. Pinkerton.

"Something under the medium size; a little thin, but not bad lines, — what I should call jimp, natty, or 'lissome,' in the Scotch dialect. A well-trained voice; no uncertainty about it, — altogether about as keen and wide-awake a woman as you'll find in a day's travel."

"You guessed all this from her figure?" Mr. Spenham asked, with a sneer.

"Not entirely. I saw her face. I suppose something in my appearance or attitude attracted her attention. While Mr. Linthicum was weighing the arsenic she leaned over the counter, let her veil fall forward slightly, and gave me a quick side-look. I bent a little at the same time, as if to examine the soaps, and saw her face in a three-quarter position, as the photographers say."

"Can you remember her features distinctly?"

"Quite so. In fact, it is difficult for me to forget a female face. Hers was just verging on the sharp, but still tolerably handsome. Hair quite dark, and worn in ringlets; eyebrows clean and straight; mouth a little too thin for my fancy; and eyes — well, I could n't undertake to say exactly what color they were, for she seemed to have the

trick — very common in the city — of letting the lids droop over them.”

“Were you able to judge of her age?”

“Tolerably, I should say. There is a certain air of preservation which enables a practised eye to distinguish an old girl from a young one. She was certainly not to be called young, — somewhere between twenty-eight and thirty-five.”

“You heard the name she gave Mr. Linthicum?”

“Distinctly. Mr. Linthicum politely stated that it was his custom to register the names of all those to whom he furnished either poisons or prescriptions requiring care in being administered. She said, ‘You are *very* particular, sir’; and, a moment afterwards, ‘Pardon me, perhaps it is necessary.’ ‘What name, then?’ he asked. I thought she hesitated a moment, but this I will not say positively; whether or not, the answer was, ‘Miss Henderson.’ She went out of the store with a light, brisk step.”

“You are sure you would be able to recognize the lady?” Mr. Pinkerton asked.

“Quite sure.” And Mr. Augustus Fitzwilliam Case smiled patronizingly, as if the question were superfluous.

Mr. Pinkerton made a sign to Lucy, and she arose.

“Look upon this lady!” he said to the witness.

The latter made a slight, graceful inclination of his head, as much as to say, “Pardon me, I am compelled to stare.” Lucy quietly endured his gaze.

“Consider her well,” said the lawyer, “and then tell the jury whether she is the person.”

“No consideration is necessary. This lady has not the slightest resemblance to Miss Henderson. She is younger, taller, and modelled upon a wholly different style.”

“Will you now look at this photograph?”

“Ah!” the witness exclaimed; “you can yourself judge of the correctness of my memory! Here is Miss Hen-

derson, herself, and in three-quarter face as I saw her!”

“That,” said Mr. Pinkerton, addressing the judge and jury, — “that is the photograph of Mrs. Julia Asten.”

The spectators were astounded, and Mr. Spenham taken completely aback by this revelation. Joseph and Elwood both felt that a great weight had been lifted from their hearts. The testimony established Julia’s falsehood at the same time, and there was such an instant and complete revulsion of opinion that many persons present at once suspected her of a design to poison Joseph.

“Before calling upon Mr. Benjamin Blessing, the father of the late Mrs. Asten, for his testimony,” said Mr. Pinkerton, — “and I believe he will be the last witness necessary, — I wish to show that, although Miss Lucy Henderson accompanied Mrs. Asten to Magnolia, she could not have visited Mr. Linthicum’s drug-store at the time indicated; nor, indeed, at any time during that day. She made several calls upon friends, each of whom is now in attendance, and their joint evidence will account for every minute of her stay in the place. The base attempt to blacken her fair name imperatively imposes this duty upon me.”

No objection was made, and the witnesses were briefly examined in succession. Their testimony was complete.

“One mystery still remains to be cleared up,” the lawyer continued; “the purpose of Mrs. Asten in purchasing the poison, and the probable explanation of her death. I say ‘probable,’ because absolute certainty is impossible. But I will not anticipate the evidence. Mr. Benjamin Blessing, step forward, if you please!”

CHAPTER XXIX.

ON entering the court-room Mr. Blessing had gone to Joseph, given his hand a long, significant grasp, and looked in his face with an expression of triumph, almost of exultation. The action was not lost upon the specta-

tors or the jury, and even Joseph felt that it was intended to express the strongest faith in his innocence.

When the name was called there was a movement in the crowd, and a temporary crush in some quarters, as the people thrust forward their heads to see and listen. Mr. Blessing, bland, dignified, serene, feeling that he was the central point of interest, waited until quiet had been restored, slightly turning his head to either side, as if to summon special attention to what he should say.

After being sworn, and stating his name, he thus described his occupation:—

“I hold a position under government; nominally, it is a Deputy Inspectorship in the Custom-House, yet it possesses a confidential—I might say, if modesty did not prevent, an advisory—character.”

“In other words, a Ward Politician!” said Mr. Spenham.

“I must ask the prosecuting attorney,” Mr. Blessing blandly suggested, “not to define my place according to his own political experiences.”

There was a general smile at these words; and a very audible chuckle from spectators belonging to the opposite party.

“You are the father of the late Mrs. Julia Astens?”

“I am—her unhappy father, whom nothing but the imperious commands of justice, and the knowledge of her husband’s innocence of the crime with which he stands charged, could have compelled to appear here, and reveal the painful secrets of a family, which—”

Here Mr. Spenham interrupted him.

“I merely wish to observe,” Mr. Blessing continued, with a stately wave of his hand towards the judge and jury, “that the De Belsains and their descendants may have been frequently unfortunate, but were never dishonorable. I act in their spirit when I hold duty to the innocent living higher than consideration for the unfortunate dead.”

Here he drew forth a handker-

chief, and held it for a moment to his eyes.

“Do you know of any domestic discords between your daughter and her husband?”

“I foresaw that such might be, and took occasion to warn my daughter, on her wedding-day, not to be too sure of her influence. There was too much disparity of age, character, and experience. It could not be called crabbed age and rosy youth, but there was difference enough to justify Shakespeare’s doubts. I am aware that the court requires ocular—or auricular—evidence. The only such I have to offer is my son-in-law’s own account of the discord which preceded my daughter’s death.”

“Did this discord sufficiently explain to you the cause and manner of her death?”

“My daughter’s nature—I do not mean to digress, but am accustomed to state my views clearly—my daughter’s nature was impulsive. She inherited my own intellect, but modified by the peculiar character of the feminine nervous system. Hence she might succumb to a depression which I should resist. She appeared to be sure of her control over my son-in-law’s nature, and of success in an enterprise, in which—I regret to say—my son-in-law lost confidence. I assumed, at the time, that her usually capable mind was unbalanced by the double disappointment, and that she had rushed, unaneled, to her last account. This, I say, was the conclusion forced upon me; yet I cannot admit that it was satisfactory. It seemed to disparage my daughter’s intellectual power: it was not the act which I should have anticipated in any possible emergency.”

“Had you no suspicion that her husband might have been instrumental?” Mr. Spenham asked.

“He? he is simply incapable of that, or *any* crime!”

“We don’t want assertions,” said Mr. Spenham, sternly.

“I beg pardon of the court,” remarked Mr. Blessing, “it was a spon-

taneous expression. The touch of nature cannot always be avoided."

"Go on, sir!"

"I need not describe the shock and sorrow following my daughter's death," Mr. Blessing continued, again applying his handkerchief. "In order to dissipate it, I obtained a leave of absence from my post,—the exigencies of the government fortunately admitting of it,—and made a journey to the Oil Regions, in the interest of myself and my son-in-law. While there I received a letter from Mr. Philip Held, the contents of which—"

"Will you produce the letter?" Mr. Spenham exclaimed.

"It can be produced, if necessary. I will state nothing further, since I perceive that this would not be admissible evidence. It is enough to say that I returned to the city without delay, in order to meet Mr. Philip Held. The requirements of justice were more potent with me than the suggestions of personal interest. Mr. Held had already, as you will have noticed, from his testimony, identified the fragment of paper as having emanated from the drug-store of Wallis and Erkers, corner of Fifth and Persimmon Streets. I accompanied him to that drug-store, heard the statements of the proprietors, in answer to Mr. Held's questions,—statements, which, I confess, surprised me immeasurably (but I could not reject the natural deductions to be drawn from them), and was compelled, although it overwhelmed me with a sense of unmerited shame, to acknowledge that there was plausibility in Mr. Held's conjectures. Since they pointed to my elder daughter, Clementina, now Mrs. Spelter, and at this moment tossing upon the ocean-wave, I saw that Mr. Held might possess a discernment superior to my own. But for a lamentable cataclysm, he might have been my son-in-law, and I need not say that I prefer that refinement of character which comes of good blood to the possession of millions—"

Here Mr. Blessing was again interrupted, and ordered to confine him-

self to the simple statement of the necessary facts.

"I acknowledge the justice of the rebuke," he said. "But the sentiment of the *mens conscia recti* will sometimes obtrude through the rigid formula of Themis. In short, Mr. Philip Held's representations—"

"State those representations at once, and be done with them!" Mr. Spenham cried.

"I am coming to them presently. The Honorable Court understands, I am convinced, that a coherent narrative, although moderately prolix, is preferable to a disjointed narrative, even if the latter were terse as Tacitus. Mr. Held's representations, I repeat, satisfied me that an interview with my daughter Clementina was imperative. There was no time to be lost, for the passage of the nuptial pair had already been taken in the *Ville de Paris*. I started at once, sending a telegram in advance, and in the same evening arrived at their palatial residence in Fifth Avenue. Clementina's nature, I must explain to the Honorable Court, is very different from that of her sister,—the reappearance, I suspect, of some lateral strain of blood. She is reticent, undemonstrative,—in short, frequently inscrutable. I suspected that a direct question might defeat my object; therefore, when I was alone with her the next morning,—my son-in-law, Mr. Spelter, being called to a meeting of Erie of which he is one of the directors,—I said to her: 'My child, you are perfectly blooming! Your complexion was always admirable, but now it seems to me incomparable!'"

"This is irrelevant!" cried Mr. Spenham.

"By no means! It is the very *corpus delicti*,—the foot of Hercules,—the milk (powder would be more appropriate) in the cocoa-nut! Clementina smiled in her serene way, and made no reply. 'How do you keep it up now?' I asked, tapping her cheek; 'you must be careful, here: all persons are not so discreet as Wallis and Erkers.' She was astounded, stupefied, I might say,

but I saw that I had reached the core of truth. 'Did you suppose I was ignorant of it?' I said, still very friendly and playfully. 'Then it was Julia who told you!' she exclaimed. 'And if she did,' I answered, 'what was the harm? I have no doubt that Julia did the same thing.' 'She was always foolish,' Clementina then said; 'she envied me my complexion, and she watched me until she found out. I told her that it would not do for any except blondes, like myself, and *her* complexion was neither one thing nor the other. And I could not see that it improved much, afterwards.'

Mr. Pinkerton saw that the jury-men were puzzled, and requested Mr. Blessing to explain the conversation to them.

"It is my painful duty to obey; yet a father's feelings may be pardoned if he shrinks from presenting the facts at once in their naked — unpleasantness. However, since the use of arsenic as a cosmetic is so general in our city, especially among blondes, as Wallis and Erkers assure me, my own family is not an isolated case. Julia commenced using the drug, so Clementina informed me, after her engagement with Mr. Asten, and only a short time before her marriage. To what extent she used it, after that event, I have no means of knowing; but, I suspect, less frequently, unless she feared that the disparity of age between her and her husband was becoming more apparent. I cannot excuse her duplicity in giving Miss Henderson's name instead of her own at Mr. Linthicum's drug-store, since the result might have been so fearfully fatal; yet I entreat you to believe that there may have been no inimical *animus* in the act. I attribute her death entirely to an over-dose of the drug, voluntarily taken, but taken in a moment of strong excitement."

The feeling of relief from suspense, not only among Joseph's friends, but throughout the crowded court-room, was clearly manifested: all present seemed to breathe a lighter and fresher atmosphere.

Mr. Blessing wiped his forehead and his fat cheeks, and looked benignly around. "There are a hundred little additional details," he said, "which will substantiate my evidence; but I have surely said sufficient for the ends of justice. The heavens will not fall because I have been forced to carve the emblems of criminal vanity upon the sepulchre of an unfortunate child, — but the judgment of an earthly tribunal may well be satisfied. However, I am ready," he added, turning towards Mr. Spenham; "apply all the engines of technical procedure, and I shall not wince."

The manner of the prosecuting attorney was completely changed. He answered respectfully and courteously, and his brief cross-examination was calculated rather to confirm the evidence for the defence than to invalidate it.

Mr. Pinkerton then rose and stated that he should call no other witnesses. The fact had been established that Mrs. Asten had been in the habit of taking arsenic to improve her complexion; also that she had purchased much more than enough of the drug to cause death, at the store of Mr. Ziba Linthicum, only a few days before her demise, and under circumstances which indicated a desire to conceal the purchase. There were two ways in which the manner of her death might be explained: either she had ignorantly taken an over-dose, or, having mixed the usual quantity before descending to the garden to overhear the conversation between Mr. Asten and Lucy Henderson, had forgotten the fact in the great excitement which followed, and thoughtlessly added as much more of the poison. Her last words to her husband, which could not be introduced as evidence, but might now be repeated, showed that her death was the result of accident, and not of design. She was thus absolved of the guilt of suicide, even as her husband of the charge of murder.

Mr. Spenham, somewhat to the surprise of those who were unacquainted

with his true character, also stated that he should call no further witness for the prosecution. The testimonies of Mr. Augustus Fitzwilliam Case and Mr. Benjamin Blessing — although the latter was unnecessarily ostentatious and discursive — were sufficient to convince him that the prosecution could not make out a case. He had no doubt whatever of Mr. Joseph Asten's innocence. Lest the expressions which he had been compelled to use, in the performance of his duty, might be misunderstood, he wished to say that he had the highest respect for the characters of Mr. Asten and also of Miss Lucy Henderson. He believed the latter to be a refined and virtuous lady, an ornament to the community in which she resided. His language towards her had been professional, — by no means personal. It was in accordance with the usage of the most eminent lights of the bar; the ends of justice required the most searching examination, and the more a character was criminated the more brightly it would shine forth to the world, after the test had been successfully endured. He was simply the agent of the law, and all respect of persons was prohibited to him while in the exercise of his functions.

The judge informed the jurymen that he did not find it necessary to give them any instructions. If they were already agreed upon their verdict, even the formality of retiring might be dispensed with.

There was a minute's whispering back and forth among the men, and the foreman then rose and stated that they were agreed.

The words "Not Guilty!" spoken loudly and emphatically, were the signal for a stormy burst of applause from the audience. In vain the court-crier, aided by the constables, endeavored to preserve order. Joseph's friends gathered around him, with their congratulations; while Mr. Blessing, feeling that some recognition of the popular sentiment was required, rose and bowed repeatedly to the crowd. Philip led the way to the open air, and the others followed,

but few words were spoken until they found themselves in the large parlor of the hotel.

Mr. Blessing had exchanged some mysterious whispers with the clerk, on arriving; and presently two negro waiters entered the room, bearing wine, ice, and other refreshments. When the glasses had been filled, Mr. Blessing lifted his with an air which imposed silence on the company, and thus spake: "'Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh.' There may be occasions when silence is golden, but to-day we are content with the baser metal. A man in whom we all confide, whom we all love, has been rescued from the labyrinth of circumstances: he comes to us as a new Theseus, saved from the Minotaur of the Law! Although Mr. Held, with the assistance of his fair sister, was the Ariadne who found the clew, it has been my happy lot to assist in unrolling it; and now we all stand together, like our classic models on the free soil of Crete, to chant a pæan of deliverance. While I propose the health and happiness and good-fortune of Joseph Asten, I beg him to believe that my words come *ab imo pectore*, — from my inmost heart: if any veil of mistrust, engendered by circumstances which I will not now recall, still hangs between him and myself, I entreat him to rend that veil, even as David rent his garments, and believe in my sincerity, if he cannot in my discretion!"

Philip was the only one, besides Joseph, who understood the last allusion. He caught hold of Mr. Blessing's hand and exclaimed: "Spoken like a man!"

Joseph stepped instantly forward. "I have again been unjust," he said, "and I thank you for making me feel it. You have done me an infinite service, sacrificing your own feelings, bearing no malice against me for my hasty and unpardonable words, and showing a confidence in my character which — after what has passed between us — puts me to shame. I am both penitent and grateful: henceforth I shall know you and esteem you!"

Mr. Blessing took the offered hand, held it a moment, and then stammered, while the tears started from his eyes: "Enough! Bury the past a thousand fathoms deep! I can still say: *foi de Belsain!*"

"One more toast!" cried Philip. "Happiness and worldly fortune to the man whom misfortunes have bent but cannot break,—who has been often deceived, but who never purposely deceived in turn,—whose sentiment of honor has been to-day so nobly manifested,—Benjamin Blessing!"

While the happy company were pouring out, but not exhausting, their feelings, Lucy Henderson stole forth upon the upper balcony of the hotel. There was a secret trouble in her heart, which grew from minute to minute. She leaned upon the railing, and looked down the dusty street, passing in review the events of the two pregnant days, and striving to guess in what manner they would affect her coming life. She felt that she had done her simple duty: she had spoken no word which she was not ready to repeat; yet in her words there seemed to be the seeds of change.

After a while the hostler brought a light carriage from the stable, and Elwood Withers stepped into the street below her. He was about to take the reins, when he looked up, saw her, and remained standing. She noticed the intensely wistful expression of his face.

"Are you going, Elwood,—and alone?" she asked.

"Yes," he said, eagerly; and waited.

"Then I will go with you,—that is, if you will take me." She tried to speak lightly and playfully.

In a few minutes they were out of town, passing between the tawny fields and under the russet woods. A sweet west wind fanned them with nutty and spicy odors, and made a crisp, cheerful music among the fallen leaves.

"What a delicious change!" said Lucy, "after that stifling, dreadful room."

"Ay, Lucy,—and think how Joseph will feel it! And how near, by the chance of a hair, we came of missing the truth!"

"Elwood!" she exclaimed, "while I was giving my testimony, and I found your eyes fixed on me, were you thinking of the counsel you gave me, three weeks ago, when we met at the tunnel?"

"I was!"

"I knew it, and I obeyed. Do you now say that I did right?"

"Not for that reason," he answered. "It was your own heart that told you what to do. I did not mean to bend or influence you in any way: I have no right."

"You have the right of a friend," she whispered.

"Yes," said he, "I sometimes take more upon myself than I ought. But it's hard, in my case, to hit a very fine line."

"O, you are now unjust to yourself, Elwood. You are both strong and generous."

"I am not strong! I am this minute spoiling my good luck. It *was* a luck from Heaven to me, Lucy, when you offered to ride home with me, and it *is*, now,—if I could only swallow the words that are rising into my mouth!"

She whispered again: "Why should you swallow them?"

"You are cruel! when you have forbidden me to speak, and I have promised to obey!"

"After all you have heard?" she asked.

"All the more for what I have heard."

She took his hand, and cried, in a trembling voice: "I have been cruel, in remaining blind to your nature. I resisted what would have been—what will be, if you do not turn away—my one happiness in this life! Do not speak,—let *me* break the prohibition! Elwood, dear, true, noble heart,—Elwood, I love you!"

"Lucy!"

And she lay upon his bosom.

Bayard Taylor.

FOUR MONTHS WITH CHARLES DICKENS.

DURING HIS FIRST VISIT TO AMERICA (IN 1842). BY HIS SECRETARY.

PART II.

FROM Philadelphia Mr. Dickens went direct to Washington. On reaching Baltimore the cars stopped awhile in the market-place. In a couple of minutes word had passed through the crowd that "Dickens was on board the train." Instantly the windows were darkened with faces, and all sorts of comments — but mostly kind and respectful — were made upon his looks and general appearance.

A market-woman near by, seeing the rush, came up close to the windows, but she could not make out what all the excitement was about, and calling to a friend who was standing at the window near me, she loudly asked, "What's the matter? What is it all about, say, John, what is it?" "Why," answered the man, looking over his shoulder, "they've got Boz here!" "Got Boz!" said she; "what's Boz? what do you mean?" "Why," said the man, "it's Dickens. They've got him in here!" "Well, what has he been doing?" said she. "He ain't been doing nothing," answered the man. "He writes books." "O," said the woman, indignantly, "is that all? what do they make such a row about that for, I should like to know!"

It was here that Mr. Dickens, in his "Notes," says he gained so much information in reference to his own nose and eyes and the impressions wrought upon different minds by his mouth and chin, and how his head looked when viewed from behind, etc. On arriving at Washington Mr. Dickens went to his quarters at "Willard's." But "Willard's" was not then the splendid hotel it now is. It was a low two-story building, with many odd additions which had been put on at intervals, and the rooms were small. But the house was well kept, and every attention was paid

the visitors. There was a big triangle placed in the back yard close to our rooms, and at all hours of the day and night it sent its summons to the servants. It was rather troublesome for a day or two, but we finally got used to it. Mr. Dickens had letters from distinguished English and American friends to all the leading members of Congress and other official dignitaries, and in due time Webster, Calhoun, Bell of Tennessee, and many others, called to pay their respects. Among the rest the Honorable R. C., then member of the Senate from Massachusetts, came. I had often heard his splendid pleading at the bar; and after he left I said to Mr. Dickens: "That, sir, is one of the most remarkable men in our country." "Good God! Mr. P.," answered he, "they are all so! I have scarcely met a man since my arrival who was n't one of the most remarkable men in the country!"

Mr. Dickens visited President Tyler, and afterwards, with Mrs. Dickens, attended a reception at the White House; and, as it was known that he was to be present, the attendance was very large and fashionable, and made brilliant by the presence of eminent statesmen and government officials with their families. Washington Irving, who had just received his appointment as Minister to Spain, was, to Mr. Dickens's great joy, also present, and shared with him the honors of the occasion.

While at Washington an ocean steamer, supposed to have been lost, arrived at New York, and the long-looked-for tidings from home and family came at last, to their great relief.

Leaving Washington, Mr. Dickens took the steamer down the Potomac to Potomac Creek. He rose early in the morning to get a glimpse of

Mount Vernon, for he cherished a profound respect for the great man who lies buried there. On arriving at Potomac Creek we found stages to take us to Fredericksburg, Virginia, and as usual Mr. Dickens secured his favorite seat on the box beside the driver. This ride and the negro drivers of the seven coaches is most graphically described in his "Notes." The roads were bad past all description, and seemed to be impassable; but the negro drivers possessed great skill, and drove through without accident.

At Fredericksburg we took the cars for Richmond. After travelling awhile we came to a very lonely and dismal-looking country. We passed plantations long ago deserted, the houses and barns rotting down, and the ground as barren of soil as a New England street. A gentleman told me that the vast pine barrens, stretching miles away, through which we were occasionally passing, were, years ago, the same as these barren fields; for only pines of the most meagre growth could grow on this slavery-cursed soil. I called the attention of Mr. Dickens to the sterility and ruin all around us, and he seemed astounded at the fact that this land was once fertile, the very "garden of America!" Turning to his wife, he exclaimed: "Great God! Kate, just hear what Mr. P. says! These lands were once cultivated! and have been abandoned because worn out by slave labor!" At sight of this widespread desolation his already deep detestation of slavery became intensified.

An incident upon the road added, if possible, to this feeling. Stopping at a lonely station in the forest for wood and water, we noticed a colored woman with several small children standing by, who seemed to be waiting for passage. After a little time we heard the woman and children weeping, and some one in the car asked the cause. A bluff, well-dressed man near us answered: "It's them d—dniggers; somebody has bought them and is taking them down to Richmond, and they are making a fuss about it!"

Dickens heard the answer, and what impression this separation of families made upon the mind of one who loved so well the freedom and happiness of all human beings may be imagined.

At Richmond Mr. Dickens took rooms at the Exchange. Here as elsewhere large numbers of the most prominent people called upon him, and a dinner was given in his honor. Here, too, he visited the tobacco factories, and saw "the happy slaves singing at their work." But it was a useless task to attempt to blind the eyes or corrupt the heart of this friend of humanity. All that was praiseworthy in our people and their institutions he praised without stint; but he would not indorse any wrong, especially that of slavery.

Mr. Dickens originally intended to travel quite extensively in the South; but the short time he had to remain in the country, and the increasing heat of the weather in that region, induced him to abandon the idea of going farther south than Richmond; and, after a few days' sojourn, he returned to Washington. He made a very short stay in the capital, and went thence to Baltimore, and then to Harrisburg Pennsylvania, from which place he had arranged to go by canal to Pittsburg. On arriving at Harrisburg we passed the night at an excellent hotel, and the next day went on board the canal-boat to continue our journey to Pittsburg. As it was early in the season, the boat was not overcrowded with passengers. The captain very kindly gave up his own little private cabin at the bow of boat to Mr. and Mrs. Dickens, and this made their journey unusually comfortable. The mode of travel was quite new to them, and the scarcely perceptible motion of the boat, and the perfect quiet which surrounded us, were in delightful contrast with the noise, turmoil, and excitement of the past few weeks. As we went on the number of passengers increased, and soon the little deck, or cabin top, became well covered with trunks and baggage. Here the passengers assembled and sat

upon the trunks, but at intervals the helmsman's cry of "Bridge!" "Low bridge!" would come, and then those who desired to save their brains stooped low till the bridge was passed.

In front of their cabin, at the bow of the boat, was a little deck space with room for a couple of chairs, and here Mr. and Mrs. Dickens sat for hours, greatly enjoying the absolute stillness of the scene. As evening came on, the scenery became more wild and grand, for we were approaching the "spurs of the Alleghanies," and occasionally the helmsman would take his Kent bugle and wake the echoes of the solitudes.

Excepting when out upon the tow-path for exercise, Mr. Dickens spent most of his time while on the canal in this sheltered nook at the bow of the boat, sitting by the side of his wife, reading or conversing. The country through which we were passing was now exceedingly picturesque. The log-cabins of the settlers in that almost untrodden region, the little groups of houses which constituted the "towns," the homes of the "lock-tenders," and everything around us, was so unlike anything in the old country that our travellers were never weary. Each turn in the canal brought out new combinations of scenery; and when night came on, and the moon rose over the mountains, the prospect became still more charming and novel.

It was on the deck of the canal-boat that a stranger, after following Mr. Dickens several times up and down, staring at the overcoat of "astrachan goat-skin" which Mr. Dickens wore, came to him, felt of the coat, and asked what it was, the price, etc., and many other questions. His curiosity much amused Mr. Dickens, who answered his questions very kindly, smiling all the while at the earnestness and perfect self-complacency of his questioner.

On leaving the canal-boat we took the cars up the inclined planes of the Alleghanies, and, reaching the summit, soon began the descent on the other

side. We had a very early breakfast that morning, and long before noon began to be hungry. There was no station where we could obtain refreshments, but after a long suspense we heard that about the middle of the afternoon we should "reach the hotel to dine." The time at last arrived, and the moment the train stopped we hurried into the hotel. A glance at the table showed what was likely to be the fare. So I managed to find good places near the head of the table for Mr. and Mrs. Dickens, close by what seemed to be a small dish of veal. They succeeded in getting a little of it and a small portion of bread and butter, and were thankful, as indeed they and those near the "veal" had good reason to be, for the mass of hungry passengers got little or nothing. There was a big dish of something on the table, and the long-nosed landlord walked round and round the table, asking the starving passengers, through his nose, if they would "have some of the potpie? some of the potpie?"

The "potpie" was examined and generally refused. A few, however, had the temerity to taste it. It was a mass of bacon-rinds, pork-scrap, bits of gristle, and potatoes, and such odds and ends as usually go into the wastetub, and which had probably been accumulating for several weeks. The hungry passengers took very little of it, preferring to pay for rather than to eat it. The last I saw of that landlord he was walking round the half-deserted table with the dish in his hands, and asking the guests if they would "have some of the potpie? some of the potpie?"

In due time we arrived at Pittsburg, and took rooms at the Exchange Hotel. The accommodations were excellent, and a few days were spent in visiting the objects of interest in and around the city, and in receiving visitors and making visits.

On April 1st we left Pittsburg on board the steamer Messenger for Cincinnati.

The passage down the Ohio was full of interest for our travellers, being unlike any former experience of theirs. The captain had politely given them a pleasant state-room toward the stern of the boat, and when the sun was hot they sat there on the little gallery outside and enjoyed the quiet of the scene. Toward evening Mr. and Mrs. Dickens, ever anxious to keep up their old English habit of "taking exercise," would go to the hurricane-deck and walk there for hours. During the day they sat generally outside their state-room, and seemed to enjoy much the constant change of scenery as we swept down the Ohio.

Mr. Dickens maintained throughout his travels a constant and large correspondence with friends at home; and often, while writing, his face would be convulsed with laughter at his own fun; and on his showing the letters to Mrs. Dickens she would join heartily in the mirth.

Whenever the boat reached a town on the river, word would be passed by the passengers to the people on the landing that "Boz was on board," and there would be a gathering of persons earnestly looking for him, and many gentlemen would hasten on board to get a glimpse of the great author.

On arriving at Cincinnati we went to the hotel where rooms had been already engaged, and here again the admirers of "Boz" came in crowds to see him. Mr. Dickens greatly enjoyed his visit to Cincinnati, and often referred to it with pleasure afterwards.

After spending a few days and enjoying the society of the people of this beautiful city, Mr. Dickens decided to make a visit to St. Louis, and we embarked on the steamer Pike for the latter place. On arriving at St. Louis we took rooms at the Planter's Hotel, and found it to be a most excellent place. Soon after his arrival a party composed of some fourteen gentlemen—choice spirits they were—was got up to make an excursion to the Looking-glass Prairie, many miles off on the Illinois side of the river. I recollect that Rev. Dr. Eliot of St. Louis was

that one of the number whose presence in the group was most pleasant to all, and to Mr. Dickens in particular.

We started pretty early one hot morning, and, crossing the river on the ferry-boat, landed on the opposite shore. The travelling here was dreadful. For a dozen miles at least the wheels sank below their hubs in the soft black soil of the bottom-lands, and the horses with difficulty pulled us through. On reaching the upland the road became much better. After some hours we arrived at a log settlement. It was "court term," and we breakfasted with the judges and lawyers at the log-tavern. On our way to the prairie we saw in the distance one of those mysterious "mounds," but had not time to visit it. Late in the afternoon we reached the prairie, and the baskets of lunch, brought all the way from St. Louis, were hastily unpacked, and a hearty meal of good things, among which was "buffalo's tongue," a new and delicious edible to Mr. Dickens, was eaten with a relish. We spent the night at a log-tavern on the edge of the prairie, and the next morning returned to St. Louis. Mr. Dickens enjoyed this jaunt very much. It gave him an insight into Western rural life, and he often referred to the excursion and to the gentlemen who composed the party with great pleasure.

At the Planter's House the visitors poured in as at other places, and were cordially received by Mr. and Mrs. Dickens, who always highly appreciated the generosity of their American welcome.

One day a well-known literary gentleman called and was cordially received by Mr. Dickens. After conversing for some time he began to speak of the condition of society in America, and at last in a most bland and conciliating manner asked: "Mr. Dickens, how do you like our domestic institution, sir?" "Like what, sir?" said Mr. Dickens, rousing up and looking sharply at his visitor. "Our domestic institution, sir,—slavery!" said the gentleman. Dickens's eyes blazed as he answered promptly, "Not at all, sir! I don't like

it at all, sir!" "Ah!" said his visitor, considerably abashed by the prompt and manly answer he had received, "you probably have not seen it in its *true* character, and are prejudiced against it." "Yes, sir!" was the answer, "I have seen it, sir! all I ever wish to see of it, and I detest it, sir!"

The gentleman looked mortified, abashed, and offended, and, taking his hat, bade Mr. Dickens "Good morning," which greeting was returned with promptness, and he left the room. Mr. Dickens then, in a towering passion, turned to me. "Damn their impudence, Mr. P.! If they will not thrust their accursed 'domestic institution' in my face, I will not attack it, for I did not come here for that purpose. But to tell me that a man is better off as a slave than as a freeman is an insult, and I will not endure it from any one! I will not bear it!"

It was not uncommon, in the various places at which we stayed, for persons of unsettled minds persistently to seek an interview with the novelist. It was impossible, of course, for him to see them, for he had not half time enough to devote to the *sane* people who thronged his rooms. But to these unfortunates he always sent a kind word, expressing his regret that he could not see them personally.

At St. Louis there was an old man who came and stayed about every day. His shirt-bosom and pockets were running over with manuscript, and in a letter to Mr. Dickens, he informed him that he "had paraphrased the entire Book of Job, and wanted to read it to Mr. Dickens and get his opinion of it." I had to meet the old gentleman every day with some excuse, kindly expressed, why Mr. Dickens could not see him, and so I tried to put him off each day till our time came to leave. But as the time approached, the old man determined that he would waylay Mr. Dickens in some of the passages of the hotel, and the last I saw of him he was standing looking round a corner in the hall, his bosom and pockets bursting with written and printed matter. When I told Mr.

Dickens of this, he expressed the greatest pity for the poor old man. "God help him, poor fellow!" said he.

Taking our passage down the river in the Messenger, we arrived again in due time at Cincinnati. After resting for a day here, we took the stage-coach for Columbus. The coach was crowded with passengers, and, as usual, Mr. Dickens secured his favorite seat on the box with the driver. We travelled all night, and a weary journey it was. Mrs. Dickens sat on the back seat, and my place was on the middle seat by the window in front of her. Opposite me, through the night, sat a well-dressed man; but all night long he poured out a rain of tobacco-spittle, which from the motion of the coach fell on us in showers. I tried to screen Mrs. Dickens; but notwithstanding my efforts, and the aid of a thick veil, she could not escape the disgusting results.

Arriving at Columbus, we stopped at the Neil House, an excellent hotel; a few hours were given to rest and sleep, and afterwards Mr. Dickens received for an hour or two the ladies and gentlemen who called upon him. The plan of travel was to get to Sandusky City on Lake Erie, take a steamer to Buffalo, thence go to Niagara, and thence to Canada.

At Columbus we hired a stage-coach exclusively for our party, and the stage company sent an agent with the driver to go through with us. The upper portion of Ohio was largely at that time an unbroken forest, and the accommodations for travellers were very poor. Nothing but corn-bread and bacon could be obtained at the log-cabins on the road, and so our good landlord of the Neil House had a basket of provisions put up for us to dine upon. The road was pretty good at first, but did not improve as we went on. We had, however, a good stage-coach to ourselves, and a good team and driver. So for many miles we went on quite well. The driver, at intervals of a dozen miles or so, would commence blowing his horn, to give notice at the station, a mile or more ahead, that a relay of horses was

to be ready. It was evidently unusual for an "extra" to go through on that road, and while we changed horses all the people in the log-tavern and its neighborhood would assemble to look at us, and they generally found out by questioning the driver that it was "Boz" who was travelling with an "extra" toward the lake. Soon after noon we came to a pleasant nook in the woods, not far from a log-cabin, and our basket of provisions was opened and the cloth spread upon the grass. I obtained a pitcher of cool water at the cabin near by, and dinner was ready. I trust I shall be excused if I mention here a little instance of the kindness of heart always shown by Charles Dickens. The driver and his friend, who were now waiting with the coach at a little distance, had dined at the log-tavern which we passed a half-hour before. But before *we* dined Mr. Dickens, heaping up a large quantity of oranges, apples, nuts, and raisins, which we had brought for dessert, and a quantity of wine added, requested me to take them to the driver and his companion, which I did. It was a little incident; but it was characteristic of that man throughout life to *remember others*.

After dinner I returned the pitcher, taking the basket and dishes with me to the log-cabin; and the people were greatly pleased and surprised when I made them a present of the whole. We hurried off again, as the road was constantly growing worse and night not far distant.

At the next place for changing horses — a log-tavern and stable, standing all alone in the forest — we alighted for a few moments and went in. An elderly woman received us kindly and gave us seats. In an adjoining room there were two tall, good-looking young girls, her daughters, spinning. They seemed quite desirous to know, and were too bashful to ask, who the strangers were. Being curious to see if, in the midst of the almost unbroken forests of Northern Ohio, the inmates of that lone cabin had ever heard of Charles Dickens, I incidentally mentioned his name. "Is

it, indeed?" said the girls, and with brightened eyes and looks of pleasure on their handsome faces they came and sat down where they could see Mr. and Mrs. Dickens. The coach was soon ready, and with a few words and a kind "good by" to the woman and her daughters from Mr. and Mrs. Dickens, we went on our way. I told Mr. Dickens that the girls had read his books and were happy to have seen him; and the incident seemed to gratify him, as well it might.

We soon began to know something of the exquisite softness of "corduroy roads." Some dozen miles of this kind of road lay now before us, and as they talked of "building a good road there some time or other," no repairs had for a long interval been made in the "corduroy"; consequently holes nearly large enough to bury coach, horses, and all were constantly occurring, which, however, the driver managed with great skill to avoid. It was a wondrous talent that put the wood and iron of that coach together, for it did not seem possible that it could long remain unbroken.

Mrs. Dickens had the back seat to herself; as the terrible jolting increased, Mr. Dickens, taking two handkerchiefs, tied the ends of them to the door-posts on each side, and the other ends Mrs. Dickens wound around her wrists and hands. This contrivance, to which was added the utmost bracing of the feet, enabled the kind and patient lady to endure the torture of the "corduroy." Mr. Dickens and myself occupied the middle seat, with our arms wound tightly around the other door-posts, and Mrs. Dickens's maid Ann occupied the front seat facing us. Mr. Dickens on his side, and I on mine, kept a sharp lookout ahead as well as we could, and when we saw — as we did almost every minute — an uncommonly large hole into which the wheels *must* go, we shouted, "Corduroy!" and prepared ourselves for the shock. But preparation was of little avail, for with all our strength we found it impossible to keep our places, but

were constantly tumbling upon each other and picking ourselves up from the bottom of the coach. At last we got through the swamp, and thankfully left the "corduroy" behind us. As night came on, a smart thunder-shower passed over us, and by the gleams of the lightning we followed the winding forest road. The driver told us we should reach Upper Sandusky a little before midnight and stop there till morning. This was good news, for perhaps there never yet was a set of travellers more utterly weary and worn out than ourselves. We looked forward with pleasure to supper, good clean beds, and a few hours' sleep. The time seemed very long, but at last, about eleven o'clock, when yet a mile or more from the place, our driver began to blow his horn to rouse the people at the tavern.

In due time we arrived. The log-tavern was a long, low structure a story and a half high. We got out of the coach, sore and lame, and soon sat down to a supper of bacon, bread and butter, and hot tea. Mr. and Mrs. Dickens had a room on the ground-floor, and into it all the trunks and baggage—including all overcoats and shawls—were carried. Mr. Dickens called my attention to the fact that there were no fastenings to either of the doors of his room, but said, "I can pile all the trunks up against the doors, and no one can possibly get in without waking us." Mrs. Dickens was naturally rather nervous, for the place certainly looked new and strange. We heard that an "Indian council" had just been held at the lodge near by, and there were hundreds of Indians at that time in the vicinity, and everything looked like being in a wild and uncivilized country.

So "Boz" and his wife went thankfully to rest, and the landlord, lighting a tallow candle, showed me up a flight of outer stairs into the chamber or loft of the cabin. There were two beds in the room, and one was already occupied by a man who snored in splendid style. I was too tired to mind that, and got

into bed as soon as possible. But it was useless to try to sleep. The bed literally swarmed with bugs, and I found it impossible to close my eyes. After trying in vain for some time to endure the torment, I dressed and went down the stairs again out doors. It was in April, and the night air was piercing cold. I could not obtain an overcoat or shawl, for they were all in Mr. Dickens's room, and I would not alarm Mrs. Dickens by trying to get in. So I took to the coach. It was better than standing out doors; but as it was lined with leather, it was not very warm. I spent the night in useless attempts to catch a nap.

As daylight began to glimmer, I "crowed" very loudly several times, hoping that the old darky who did the chores would think it was morning and get up and light the fires. But the ruse did not succeed, though the "crowing" was very well done indeed.

As soon as it was light, I got out and crept to the cabin. While I was standing there, Mrs. Dickens, with a face full of trouble, and rubbing her wrists and hands, came from her room to the tin wash-basin provided for the public, which stood upon a stump near the door. I bade her good morning, and asked how she had rested. "O Mr. P.," said she, "I have been almost devoured by the bugs!" I then related my "experience," which excited both her mirth and sympathy, and calling to her husband said, "Charles, Charles! just come here, and listen to what Mr. P. suffered last night!" I told my "experience" again, without any embellishments,—none were needed,—and with laughter and kind words Mr. Dickens heard it and has duly chronicled it in his "Notes."

We had breakfast, and, the coach being ready, we all got in and were on the point of starting, when the landlord mentioned that "the bill was not paid!" The bill not paid? Good Heavens! Mr. P., the bill not paid, sir! Why, how is this! I hope you have not neglected it before, have you?"

I apologized to the landlord, and explained that I had never before forgotten to pay all bills; but having spent the night in the coach, I had no consciousness of having stopped anywhere or of owing anything; with which explanation Mr. Dickens nodded and smiled his satisfaction. The landlord, however, seemed not well pleased, but received his money sullenly, and we went on our way.

Our stage-coach ride across Ohio ended at Tiffin, a small town which we reached about noon, from whence was a railroad to Sandusky City on Lake Erie. The good landlord at Tiffin, finding who were his guests, did his best to please, and also to let the entire town know that "Dickens was at his hotel." And when we left the house for the depot he had a large kind of open wagon on springs, with seats very high, on which Mr. and Mrs. Dickens were perched. I think the driver was instructed to pass through all the principal streets of the place before he reached the railroad station, for we went at a slow pace and were a long time going; and the people awaited us in groups, as if by appointment, at the street-corners and at the windows and doors of the houses; and if the inhabitants of Tiffin, Ohio, did not on that occasion see "Boz" and his wife, it certainly was not the fault of that good landlord or of his carriage-driver.

The change from coach and corduroy to the rail was most grateful, and in the evening we reached Sandusky City. A lake steamer made her appearance in the harbor the next day, and we embarked for Buffalo.

At Buffalo our travellers gladly welcomed their letters from home which were awaiting them there, and it was here that Mr. Dickens received from Carlyle and other eminent English writers the letters indorsing his views upon the subject of an "international copyright law."

It was but a short ride from Buffalo to Niagara. Mr. Dickens had been repeatedly warned not to expect too much of Niagara, and told that people

were often disappointed in their anticipations of the grandeur of the scene.

As we crossed in the ferry-boat, Dickens gazed at the falls with astonishment! When midway over, he looked around for a few moments and said, solemnly, as if to himself: "Great God! How can any man be disappointed at this!"

Rooms had been engaged at the Clifton House, and now the tired travellers looked forward to a season of perfect rest and quiet. In this they were not disappointed. It was much too early in the season for visitors, and, with the exception of a few English officers and gentlemen residing in the neighborhood, there was no company to call upon them. The time allotted to be spent at Niagara was full of pure enjoyment, and when it was over they started for Toronto, thence to Kingston, Montreal, and Quebec. At all these places Mr. Dickens and his wife were most cordially received by the government officials, officers of the army, and the resident English population. The time was pleasantly passed in rides and visits, and also in some private theatricals in which Mr. Dickens and several English officers took part.

Bidding adieu to their kind friends in Canada, Mr. and Mrs. Dickens hastened back to New York, from whence it had been arranged they should take passage to England. Having still a few days to spare, Mr. Dickens with a party of friends went out to see the Shaker village at Lebanon. They afterwards visited West Point, and then returned to New York.

The old friends came again to greet them, and many others came from Boston, Philadelphia, and other places to bid them farewell; and on the morning of the 7th of June a large party accompanied them on the steamer down the harbor to embark on board the packet-ship *George Washington*, for England.

Only those whose opportunities brought them in close contact with Charles Dickens can know the full

beauty and purity of his nature, and how intensely he loathed all that was coarse and low. An incident occurred during our journey which illustrated this. On one occasion, at a public dinner given him, — many ladies being present as spectators, — some persons, entirely mistaking the character of their guest, had secured the presence of a certain "Doctor," famous it would appear for story-telling. After the speeches commenced, there were frequent calls for the "Doctor," and at last he rose and said that he "must be excused from saying anything while the ladies were present." There was instantly a movement among the ladies to go. Mr. Dickens beckoned to me and said earnestly, "Please ask the ladies to stay, say I wish them to stay!" I spoke to Mrs. Dickens, and she said a few words to those around her, and the ladies remained. The rebuke was gentle but efficient, and there were no more calls for the "Doctor" during the rest of the evening.

Many kind letters of remembrance came to me from Mr. Dickens during the long interval which has passed since his memorable visit in 1842, and it scarcely need be said that on the occasion of his last coming he received the writer of these recollections with both hands outstretched and with a most cordial greeting. And then together we again went over the old journey.

I congratulated him upon his evident health and robustness, and spoke of the long years that we trusted were yet before him, in which the world should receive yet more of his wondrous productions; and his cheery answer was, "I am, indeed, well and very strong. And, please God, Mr. P., we'll do something yet!"

But that hope has been disappointed. A loving world has looked for the last time upon that dear face, listened to the last words, read the last line, of Charles Dickens, and the record is closed forever!

MURILLO'S "IMMACULATE CONCEPTION."

WHENCE is the spell — O fair and free from guile,
 Thou with the young moon shod! — that binds my brain?
 Is thine that orb of fable which did wane,
 Darkening o'er sad Ortygia's templed isle, —
 Beautiful Artemis, hid from earth awhile,
 And on the pale monk's vigil risen again,
 A wonder in the starry sky of Spain?
 Comes the Myth back, Madonna, in thy smile?
 Yea! thou dost teach that the Divine may be
 The same to passing creeds and ages given;
 And how the Greek hath dreamed, or churchman striven,
 What reck we, who with eyes tear-blinded see
 Thee standing loveliest in the open heaven? —
 Ave Maria! only heaven and thee!

David Gray.

TRAVELLING COMPANIONS.

I.

THE most strictly impressive picture in Italy is incontestably the Last Supper of Leonardo at Milan. A part of its immense solemnity is doubtless due to its being one of the first of the great Italian masterworks that you encounter in coming down from the North. Another secondary source of interest resides in the very completeness of its decay. The mind finds a rare delight in filling each of its vacant spaces, effacing its rank defilement, and repairing, as far as possible, its sad disorder. Of the essential power and beauty of the work there can be no better evidence than this fact that, having lost so much, it has yet retained so much. An unquenchable elegance lingers in those vague outlines and incurable scars; enough remains to place you in sympathy with the unfathomable wisdom of the painter. The fresco covers a wall, the reader will remember, at the end of the former refectory of a monastery now suppressed, the precinct of which is occupied by a regiment of cavalry. Horses stamp, soldiers rattle their oaths, in the cloisters which once echoed to the sober tread of monastic sandals and the pious greetings of meek-voiced friars.

It was the middle of August, and summer sat brooding fiercely over the streets of Milan. The great brick-wrought dome of the church of St. Mary of the Graces rose black with the heat against the brazen sky. As my *fiacre* drew up in front of the church, I found another vehicle in possession of the little square of shade which carpeted the glaring pavement before the adjoining convent. I left the two drivers to share this advantage as they could, and made haste to enter the cooler presence of the Cenacolo. Here I found the occupants of the *fiacre* with-out, a young lady and an elderly man.

Here also, besides the official who takes your tributary franc, sat a long-haired copyist, wooing back the silent secrets of the great fresco into the cheerfulest commonplaces of yellow and blue. The gentleman was earnestly watching this ingenious operation; the young lady sat with her eyes fixed on the picture, from which she failed to move them when I took my place on a line with her. I too, however, speedily became as unconscious of her presence as she of mine, and lost myself in the study of the work before us. A single glance had assured me that she was an American.

Since that day, I have seen all the great art treasures of Italy: I have seen Tintoretto at Venice, Michael Angelo at Florence and Rome, Correggio at Parma; but I have looked at no other picture with an emotion equal to that which rose within me as this great creation of Leonardo slowly began to dawn upon my intelligence from the tragical twilight of its ruin. A work so nobly conceived can never utterly die, so long as the half-dozen main lines of its design remain. Neglect and malice are less cunning than the genius of the great painter. It has stored away with masterly skill such a wealth of beauty as only perfect love and sympathy can fully detect. So, under my eyes, the restless ghost of the dead fresco returned to its mortal abode. From the beautiful central image of Christ I perceived its radiation right and left along the sadly broken line of the disciples. One by one, out of the depths of their grim dismemberment, the figures trembled into meaning and life, and the vast, serious beauty of the work stood revealed. What is the ruling force of this magnificent design? Is it art? is it science? is it sentiment? is it knowl-

edge? I am sure I can't say; but in moments of doubt and depression I find it of excellent use to recall the great picture with all possible distinctness. Of all the works of man's hands it is the least superficial.

The young lady's companion finished his survey of the copyist's work and came and stood behind his chair. The reader will remember that a door has been rudely cut in the wall, a part of it entering the fresco.

"He has n't got in that door," said the old gentleman, speaking apparently of the copyist.

The young lady was silent. "Well, my dear," he continued. "What do you think of it?"

The young girl gave a sigh. "I see it," she said.

"You see it, eh? Well, I suppose there is nothing more to be done."

The young lady rose slowly, drawing on her glove. As her eyes were still on the fresco, I was able to observe her. Beyond doubt she was American. Her age I fancied to be twenty-two. She was of middle stature, with a charming slender figure. Her hair was brown, her complexion fresh and clear. She wore a white piqué dress and a black lace shawl, and on her thick dark braids a hat with a purple feather. She was largely characterized by that physical delicacy and that personal elegance (each of them sometimes excessive) which seldom fail to betray my young countrywomen in Europe. The gentleman, who was obviously her father, bore the national stamp as plainly as she. A shrewd, firm, generous face, which told of many dealings with many men, of stocks and shares and current prices,—a face, moreover, in which there lingered the mellow afterglow of a sense of excellent claret. He was bald and grizzled, this perfect American, and he wore a short-bristled white moustache between the two hard wrinkles forming the sides of a triangle of which his mouth was the base and the ridge of his nose, where his eyeglass sat, the apex. In deference perhaps to this exotic growth, he was

better dressed than is common with the typical American citizen, in a blue necktie, a white waistcoat, and a pair of gray trousers. As his daughter still lingered, he looked at me with an eye of sagacious conjecture.

"Ah, that beautiful, beautiful, beautiful Christ," said the young lady, in a tone which betrayed her words in spite of its softness. "O father, what a picture!"

"Hum!" said her father, "I don't see it."

"I must get a photograph," the young girl rejoined. She turned away and walked to the farther end of the hall, where the custodian presides at a table of photographs and prints. Meanwhile her father had perceived my Murray.

"English, sir?" he demanded.

"No, I'm an American, like yourself, I fancy."

"Glad to make your acquaintance, sir. From New York?"

"From New York. I have been absent from home, however, for a number of years."

"Residing in this part of the world?"

"No. I have been living in Germany. I have only just come into Italy."

"Ah, so have we. The young lady is my daughter. She is crazy about Italy. We were very nicely fixed at Interlaken, when suddenly she read in some confounded book or other that Italy should be seen in summer. So she dragged me over the mountains into this fiery furnace. I'm actually melting away. I have lost five pounds in three days."

I replied that the heat was indeed intense, but that I agreed with his daughter that Italy should be seen in summer. What could be pleasanter than the temperature of that vast cool hall?

"Ah, yes," said my friend; "I suppose we shall have plenty of this kind of thing. It makes no odds to me, so long as my poor girl has a good time."

"She seems," I remarked, "to be

having a pretty good time with the photographs." In fact, she was comparing photographs with a great deal of apparent energy, while the salesman lauded his wares in the Italian manner. We strolled over to the table. The young girl was seemingly in treaty for a large photograph of the head of Christ, in which the blurred and fragmentary character of the original was largely intensified, though much of its exquisite pathetic beauty was also preserved. "They'll not think much of that at home," said the old gentleman.

"So much the worse for them," said his daughter, with an accent of delicate pity. With the photograph in her hand, she walked back to the fresco. Her father engaged in an English dialogue with the custodian. In the course of five minutes, wishing likewise to compare the copy and the original, I returned to the great picture. As I drew near it the young lady turned away. Her eyes then for the first time met my own. They were deep and dark and luminous, — I fancied streaming with tears. I watched her as she returned to the table. Her walk seemed to me peculiarly graceful; light, and rapid, and yet full of decision and dignity. A thrill of delight passed through my heart as I guessed at her moistened lids.

"Sweet fellow - countrywoman," I cried in silence, "you have the divine gift of feeling." And I returned to the fresco with a deepened sense of its virtue. When I turned around, my companions had left the room.

In spite of the great heat, I was prepared thoroughly to "do" Milan. In fact, I rather enjoyed the heat; it seemed to my Northern senses to deepen the Italian, the Southern, the local character of things. On that blazing afternoon, I have not forgotten, I went to the church of St. Ambrose, to the Ambrosian Library, to a dozen minor churches. Every step distilled a richer drop into the wholesome cup of pleasure. From my earliest manhood, beneath a German sky, I had dreamed

of this Italian pilgrimage, and, after much waiting and working and planning, I had at last undertaken it in a spirit of fervent devotion. There had been moments in Germany when I fancied myself a clever man; but it now seemed to me that for the first time I really *felt* my intellect. Imagination, panting and exhausted, withdrew from the game; and Observation stepped into her place, trembling and glowing with open-eyed desire.

I had already been twice to the Cathedral, and had wandered through the clustering inner darkness of the high arcades which support those light-defying pinnacles and spires. Towards the close of the afternoon I found myself strolling once more over the great column-planted, altar-studded pavement, with the view of ascending to the roof. On presenting myself at the little door in the right transept, through which you gain admission to the upper regions, I perceived my late fellow-visitors of the fresco preparing apparently for an upward movement, but not without some reluctance on the paternal side. The poor gentleman had been accommodated with a chair, on which he sat fanning himself with his hat and looking painfully apoplectic. The sacristan meanwhile held open the door with an air of invitation. But my corpulent friend, with his thumb in his Murray, balked at the ascent. Recognizing me, his face expressed a sudden sense of vague relief.

"Have you been up, sir?" he inquired, groaningly.

I answered that I was about to ascend; and recalling then the fact, which I possessed rather as information than experience, that young American ladies may not improperly detach themselves on occasion from the parental side, I ventured to declare that, if my friend was unwilling to encounter the fatigue of mounting to the roof in person, I should be most happy, as a fellow-countryman, qualified already perhaps to claim a traveller's acquaintance, to accompany and assist his daughter.

"You're very good, sir," said the

poor man; "I confess that I'm about played out. I'd far rather sit here and watch these pretty Italian ladies saying their prayers. Charlotte, what do you say?"

"Of course if you're tired I should be sorry to have you make the effort," said Charlotte. "But I believe the great thing is to see the view from the roof. I'm much obliged to the gentleman."

It was arranged accordingly that we should ascend together. "Good luck to you," cried my friend, "and mind you take good care of her."

Those who have rambled among the marble immensities of the summit of Milan Cathedral will hardly expect me to describe them. It is only when they have been seen as a complete concentric whole that they can be properly appreciated. It was not as a whole that I saw them; a week in Italy had assured me that I have not the architectural *coup d'œil*. In looking back on the scene into which we emerged from the stifling spiral of the ascent, I have chiefly a confused sense of an immense skyward elevation and a fierce blinding efflorescence of fantastic forms of marble. There, reared for the action of the sun, you find a vast marble world. The solid whiteness lies in mighty slabs along the iridescent slopes of nave and transept, like the lonely snow-fields of the higher Alps. It leaps and climbs and shoots and attacks the unsheltered blue with a keen and joyous incision. It meets the pitiless sun with a more than equal glow; the day falters, declines, expires, but the marble shines forever, unmelted and unintermittent. You will know what I mean if you have looked upward from the Piazza at midnight. With confounding frequency too, on some uttermost point of a pinnacle, its plastic force explodes into satisfied rest in some perfect flower of a figure. A myriad carved statues, known only to the circling air, are poised and niched beyond reach of human vision, the loss of which to mortal eyes is, I suppose, the gain of the Church and the

Lord. Among all the jewelled shrines and overwrought tabernacles of Italy, I have seen no such magnificent waste of labor, no such glorious synthesis of cunning secrets. As you wander, sweating and blinking, over the changing levels of the edifice, your eye catches at a hundred points the little profile of a little saint, looking out into the dizzy air, a pair of folded hands praying to the bright immediate heavens, a sandalled monkish foot planted on the edge of the white abyss. And then, besides this mighty world of the great Cathedral itself, you possess the view of all green Lombardy,—vast, lazy Lombardy, resting from its Alpine upheavals.

My companion carried a little white umbrella, with a violet lining. Thus protected from the sun, she climbed and gazed with abundant courage and spirit. Her movements, her glance, her voice, were full of intelligent pleasure. Now that I could observe her closely, I saw that, though perhaps without regular beauty, she was yet, for youth, summer, and Italy, more than pretty enough. Owing to my residence in Germany, among Germans, in a small university town, Americans had come to have for me, in a large degree, the interest of novelty and remoteness. Of the charm of American women, in especial, I had formed a very high estimate, and I was more than ready to be led captive by the far-famed graces of their frankness and freedom. I already felt that in the young girl beside me there was a different quality of womanhood from any that I had recently known; a keenness, a maturity, a conscience, which deeply stirred my curiosity. It was positive, not negative maidenhood.

"You're an American," I said, as we stepped to look at the distance.

"Yes; and you?" In her voice alone the charm faltered. It was high, thin, and nervous.

"O, happily, I'm also one."

"I should n't have thought so. I should have taken you for a German."

"By education I am a German. I

knew you were an American the moment I looked at you."

"I suppose so. It seems that American women are easily recognized. But don't talk about America." She paused and swept her dark eye over the whole immensity of prospect. "This is Italy," she cried, "Italy, Italy!"

"Italy indeed. What do you think of the Leonardo?"

"I fancy there can be only one feeling about it. It must be the saddest and finest of all pictures. But I know nothing of art. I have seen nothing yet but that lovely Raphael in the Brera."

"You have a vast deal before you. You're going southward, I suppose."

"Yes, we are going directly to Venice. There I shall see Titian."

"Titian and Paul Veronese."

"Yes, I can hardly believe it. Have you ever been in a gondola?"

"No; this is my first visit to Italy."

"Ah, this is all new, then, to you as well."

"Divinely new," said I, with fervor.

She glanced at me, with a smile, — a ray of friendly pleasure in my pleasure. "And you are not disappointed!"

"Not a jot. I'm too good a German."

"I'm too good an American. I live at Araminta, New Jersey!"

We thoroughly "did" the high places of the church, concluding with an ascent into the little gallery of the central spire. The view from this spot is beyond all words, especially the view toward the long mountain line which shuts out the North. The sun was sinking: clear and serene upon their blue foundations, the snow-peaks sat clustered and scattered, and shrouded in silence and light. To the south the long shadows fused and multiplied, and the bosky Lombard flats melted away into perfect Italy. This prospect offers a great emotion to the Northern traveller. A vague, delicious impulse of conquest stirs in his heart. From his dizzy vantage-point, as he looks down at her, beautiful, historic, exposed, he embraces the whole land in the far-reach-

ing range of his desire. "That is Monte Rosa," I said; "that is the Simplon pass; there is the triple glitter of those lovely lakes."

"Poor Monte Rosa," said my companion.

"I'm sure I never thought of Monte Rosa as an object of pity."

"You don't know what she represents. She represents the genius of the North. There she stands, frozen and fixed, resting her head upon that mountain wall, looking over at this lovely southern world and yearning towards it forever in vain."

"It is very well she can't come over. She would melt."

"Very true. She is beautiful, too, in her own way. I mean to fancy that I am her chosen envoy, and that I have come up here to receive her blessing."

I made an attempt to point out a few localities. "Yonder lies Venice, out of sight. In the interval are a dozen divine little towns. I hope to visit them all. I shall ramble all day in their streets and churches, their little museums, and their great palaces. In the evening I shall sit at the door of a café in the little piazza, scanning some lovely civic edifice in the moonlight, and saying, 'Ah! this is Italy!'"

"You gentlemen are certainly very happy. I'm afraid we must go straight to Venice."

"Your father insists upon it?"

"He wishes it. Poor father! in early life he formed the habit of being in a hurry, and he can't break it even now, when, being out of business, he has nothing on earth to do."

"But in America I thought daughters insisted as well as fathers."

The young girl looked at me, half serious, half smiling. "Have you a mother?" she asked; and then, blushing the least bit at her directness and without waiting for an answer, "This is not America," she said. "I should like to think I might become for a while a creature of Italy."

Somehow I felt a certain contagion in her momentary flash of frankness.

"I strongly suspect," I said, "that you are American to the depths of your soul, and that you'll never be anything else; I hope not."

In this hope of mine there was perhaps a little impertinence; but my companion looked at me with a gentle smile, which seemed to hint that she forgave it. "You, on the other hand," she said, "are a perfect German, I fancy; and you'll never be anything else."

"I am sure I wish with all my heart," I answered, "to be a good American. I'm open to conversion. Try me."

"Thank you; I haven't the ardor; I'll make you over to my father. We mustn't forget, by the way, that he is waiting for us."

We did forget it, however, awhile longer. We came down from the tower and made our way to the balustrade which edges the front of the edifice, and looked down on the city and the piazza below. Milan had, to my sense, a peculiar charm of temperate gayety,—the softness of the South without its laxity; and I felt as if I could gladly spend a month there. The common life of the streets was beginning to stir and murmur again, with the subsiding heat and the approaching night. There came up into our faces a delicious emanation as from the sweetness of Transalpine life. At the little balconies of the windows, beneath the sloping awnings, with their feet among the crowded flower-pots and their plump bare arms on the iron rails, lazy, dowdy Italian beauties would appear, still drowsy with the broken *siesta*. Beautiful, slim young officers had begun to dot the pavement, glorious with their clanking swords, their brown moustaches, and their legs of azure. In gentle harmony with these, various ladies of Milan were issuing forth to enjoy the cool; elegant, romantic, provoking, in short black dresses and lace mantillas depending from their *chignons*, with a little cloud of powder artfully enhancing the darkness of their hair and eyes. How it all was n't Germany! how it could n't have been Araminta, New Jersey! "It's the South, the South," I

kept repeating,— "the South in nature, in man, in manners." It was a brighter world. "It's the South," I said to my companion. "Don't you feel it in all your nerves?"

"O, it's very pleasant," she said.

"We must forget all our cares and duties and sorrows. We must go in for the beautiful. Think of this great trap for the sunbeams, in this city of yellows and russets and crimsons, of liquid vowels and glancing smiles being, like one of our Northern cathedrals, a temple to Morality and Conscience. It does n't belong to heaven, but to earth,—to love and light and pleasure."

My friend was silent a moment. "I'm glad I'm not a Catholic," she said at last. "Come, we must go down."

We found the interior of the Cathedral delightfully cool and shadowy. The young lady's father was not at our place of ingress, and we began to walk through the church in search of him. We met a number of Milanese ladies, who charmed us with their sombre elegance and the Spanish romance of their veils. With these pale penitents and postulants my companion had a lingering sisterly sympathy.

"Don't you wish you were a Catholic now?" I asked. "It would be so pleasant to wear one of those lovely mantillas."

"The mantillas are certainly becoming," she said. "But who knows what horrible old-world sorrows and fears and remorses they cover? Look at this person." We were standing near the great altar. As she spoke, a woman rose from her knees, and as she drew the folds of her lace mantle across her bosom, fixed her large dark eyes on us with a peculiar significant intensity. She was of less than middle age, with a pale, haggard face, a certain tarnished elegance of dress, and a remarkable nobleness of gesture and carriage. She came towards us, with an odd mixture, in her whole expression, of decency and defiance. "Are you English?" she said in Italian. "You are very pretty. Is he a brother or a lover?"

"He is neither," said I, affecting a tone of rebuke.

"Neither? only a friend! You are very happy to have a friend, Signorina. Ah, you are pretty! You were watching me at my prayers just now; you thought me very curious, apparently. I don't care. You may see me here any day. But I devoutly hope you may never have to pray such bitter, bitter prayers as mine. A thousand excuses." And she went her way.

"What in the world does she mean?" said my companion.

"Monte Rosa," said I, "was the genius of the North. This poor woman is the genius of the Picturesque. She shows us the essential misery that lies behind it. It's not an unwholesome lesson to receive at the outset. Look at her sweeping down the aisle. What a poise of the head! The picturesque is handsome, all the same."

"I do wonder what is her trouble," murmured the young girl. "She has swept away an illusion in the folds of those black garments."

"Well," said I, "here is a solid fact to replace it." My eyes had just lighted upon the object of our search. He sat in a chair, half tilted back against a pillar. His chin rested on his shirt-bosom, and his hands were folded together over his waistcoat, where it most protruded. Shirt and waistcoat rose and fell with visible, audible regularity. I wandered apart and left his daughter to deal with him. When she had fairly aroused him, he thanked me heartily for my care of the young lady, and expressed the wish that we might meet again. "We start to-morrow for Venice," he said. "I want awfully to get a whiff of the sea-breeze and to see if there is anything to be got out of a gondola."

As I expected also to be in Venice before many days, I had little doubt of our meeting. In consideration of this circumstance, my friend proposed that we should exchange cards; which we accordingly did, then and there, before the high altar, above the gorgeous chapel which enshrines the relics of

St. Charles Borromeus. It was thus that I learned his name to be Mr. Mark Evans.

"Take a few notes for us!" said Miss Evans, as I shook her hand in farewell.

I spent the evening, after dinner, strolling among the crowded streets of the city, tasting of Milanese humanity. At the door of a café I perceived Mr. Evans seated at a little round table. He seemed to have discovered the merits of absinthe. I wondered where he had left his daughter. She was in her room, I fancied, writing her journal.

The fortnight which followed my departure from Milan was in all respects memorable and delightful. With an interest that hourly deepened as I read, I turned the early pages of the enchanting romance of Italy. I carried out in detail the programme which I had sketched for Miss Evans. Those few brief days, as I look back on them, seem to me the sweetest, fullest, calmest of my life. All personal passions, all restless egotism, all worldly hopes, regrets, and fears were stilled and absorbed in the steady perception of the material present. It exhaled the pure essence of romance. What words can reproduce the picture which these Northern Italian towns project upon a sympathetic retina? They are shabby, deserted, dreary, decayed, unclean. In those August days the southern sun poured into them with a fierceness which might have seemed fatal to any lurking shadow of picturesque mystery. But taking them as cruel time had made them and left them, I found in them an immeasurable instruction and charm. My perception seemed for the first time to live a sturdy creative life of its own. How it fed upon the mouldy crumbs of the festal past! I have always thought the observant faculty a windy impostor, so long as it refuses to pocket pride and doff its bravery and crawl on all-fours, if need be, into the unilluminated corners and crannies of life. In these dead cities of Verona, Mantua, Padua, how life had revelled and postured in its strength! How

sentiment and passion had blossomed and flowered! How much of history had been performed! What a wealth of mortality had ripened and decayed! I have never elsewhere got so deep an impression of the social secrets of mankind. In England, even, in those verdure-stifled haunts of domestic peace which muffle the sounding chords of British civilization, one has a fainter sense of the possible movement and fruition of individual character. Beyond a certain point you fancy it merged in the general medium of duty, business, and politics. In Italy, in spite of your knowledge of the strenuous public conscience which once inflamed these compact little states, the unapplied, spontaneous moral life of society seems to have been more active and more subtle. I walked about with a volume of Stendahl in my pocket; at every step I gathered some lingering testimony to the exquisite vanity of ambition.

But the great emotion, after all, was to feel myself among scenes in which art had ranged so freely. It had often enough been bad, but it had never ceased to be art. An invincible instinct of beauty had presided at life, — an instinct often ludicrously crude and primitive. Wherever I turned I found a vital principle of grace, — from the smile of a chambermaid to the curve of an arch. My memory reverts with an especial tenderness to certain hours in the dusky, faded saloons of those vacant, ruinous palaces which boast of "collections." The pictures are frequently poor, but the visitor's impression is generally rich. The brick-tiled floors are bare; the doors lack paint; the great windows, curtains; the chairs and tables have lost their gilding and their damask drapery; but the ghost of a graceful aristocracy treads at your side and does the melancholy honors of the abode with a dignity that brooks no sarcasm. You feel that art and piety here have been blind, generous instincts. You are reminded in persuasive accents of the old personal regimen in human affairs. Certain pictures are veiled and curtained *virginibus puerisque*.

Through these tarnished halls lean and patient abbés led their youthful virginal pupils. Have you read Stendahl's *Chartreuse de Parme*? There was such a gallery in the palace of the Duchess of San Severino. After a long day of strolling, lounging, and staring, I found a singularly perfect pleasure in sitting at the door of a café in the warm starlight, eating an ice and making an occasional experiment in the way of talk with my neighbors. I recall with peculiar fondness and delight three sweet sessions in the delicious Piazza die Signori at Verona. The Piazza is small, compact, private almost, accessible only to pedestrians, paved with great slabs which have known none but a gentle human tread. On one side of it rises in elaborate elegance and grace, above its light arched *loggia*, the image-bordered mass of the ancient palace of the Council; facing this stand two sterner, heavier buildings, dedicated to municipal offices and to the lodgement of soldiers. Step through the archway which leads out of the Piazza and you will find a vast quadrangle with a staircase climbing sunward, along the wall, a row of gendarmes sitting in the shade, a group of soldiers cleaning their muskets, a dozen persons of either sex leaning downward from the open windows. At one end of the little square rose into the pale darkness the high slender shaft of a brick campanile; in the centre glittered steadily a colossal white statue of Dante. Behind this statue was the Caffè Dante, where on three successive days I sat till midnight, feeling the scene, learning its sovereign "distinction." But of Verona I shall not pretend to speak. As I drew near Venice I began to feel a soft impatience, an expectant tremor of the heart. The day before reaching it I spent at Vicenza. I wandered all day through the streets, of course, looking at Palladio's palaces and enjoying them in defiance of reason and Ruskin. They seemed to me essentially rich and palatial. In the evening I resorted, as usual, to the city's generous heart, the decayed ex-glorious Piazza. This spot at Vicenza

affords you a really soul-stirring premonition of Venice. There is no Byzantine Basilica and no Ducal Palace ; but there is an immense impressive hall of council, and a soaring campanile, and there are two discrowned columns telling of defeated Venetian dominion. Here I seated myself before a café door, in a group of gossiping votaries of the Southern night. The tables being mostly occupied, I had some difficulty in finding one. In a short time I perceived a young man walking through the crowd, seeking where he might bestow himself. Passing near me, he stopped and asked me with irresistible grace if he might share my table. I cordially assented : he sat down and ordered a glass of sugar and water. He was of about my own age, apparently, and full of the opulent beauty of the greater number of young Italians. His dress was simple even to shabbiness : he might have been a young prince in disguise, a Haroun-al-Raschid. With small delay we engaged in conversation. My companion was boyish, modest, and gracious ; he nevertheless discoursed freely on the things of Vicenza. He was so good as to regret that we had not met earlier in the day ; it would have given him such pleasure to accompany me on my tour of the city. He was passionately fond of art : he was in fact an artist. Was I fond of pictures ? Was I inclined to purchase ? I answered that I had no desire to purchase modern pictures, that in fact I had small means to purchase any. He informed me that he had a beautiful ancient work which, to his great regret, he found himself compelled to sell ; a most divine little Correggio. Would I do him the favor to look at it ? I had small belief in the value of this unrenowned masterpiece ; but I felt a kindness for the young painter. I consented to have him call for me the next morning and take me to his house, where for two hundred years, he assured me, the work had been jealously preserved.

He came punctually, beautiful, smiling, shabby, as before. After a ten minutes' walk we stopped before a

gaudy half-palazzo which rejoiced in a vague Palladian air. In the basement, looking on the court, lived my friend ; with his mother, he informed me, and his sister. He ushered me in, through a dark antechamber, into which, through a gaping kitchen door, there gushed a sudden aroma of onions. I found myself in a high, half-darkened saloon. One of the windows was open into the court, from which the light entered verdantly through a row of flowering plants. In an arm-chair near the window sat a young girl in a dressing-gown, empty-handed, pale, with wonderful eyes, apparently an invalid. At her side stood a large elderly woman in a rusty black silk gown, with an agreeable face, flushed a little, apparently with the expectation of seeing me. The young man introduced them as his mother and his sister. On a table near the window, propped upright in such a way as to catch the light, was a small picture in a heavy frame. I proceeded to examine it. It represented in simple composition a Madonna and Child ; the mother facing you, pressing the infant to her bosom, faintly smiling, and looking out of the picture with a solemn sweetness. It was pretty, it was good ; but it was not Correggio. There was indeed a certain suggestion of his exquisite touch ; but it was a likeness merely, and not the precious reality. One fact, however, struck swiftly home to my consciousness : the face of the Madonna bore a singular resemblance to that of Miss Evans. The lines, the character, the expression, were the same ; the faint half-thoughtful smile was hers, the feminine frankness and gentle confidence of the brow, from which the dark hair waved back with the same even abundance. All this, in the Madonna's face, was meant for heaven ; and on Miss Evans's in a fair degree, probably, for earth. But the mutual likeness was, nevertheless, perfect, and it quickened my interest in the picture to a point which the intrinsic merit of the work would doubtless have failed to justify ; al-

though I confess that I was now not slow to discover a great deal of agreeable painting in it.

"But I doubt of its being a Correggio," said I.

"A Correggio, I give you my word of honor, sir!" cried my young man.

"*Ecco!* my son's word of honor," cried his mother.

"I don't deny," I said, "that it is a very pretty work. It is perhaps Parmigianino."

"O no, sir," the elder insisted, "a true Correggio! We have had it two hundred years! Try another light; you will see. A true Correggio! Is n't it so, my daughter?"

The young man put his arm in mine, played his fingers airily over the picture, and whispered of a dozen beauties.

"O, I grant you," said I, "it's a very pretty picture." As I looked at it I felt the dark eyes of the young girl in the arm-chair fixed upon me with almost unpleasant intensity. I met her gaze for a moment: I found in it a strange union of defiant pride and sad despondent urgency.

"What do you ask for the picture?" I said.

There was a silence.

"Speak, *madre mia*," said the young man.

"*La senta!*" and the lady played with her broken fan. "We should like you to name a price."

"O, if I named a price, it would not be as for a Correggio. I can't afford to buy Correggios. If this were a real Correggio, you would be rich. You should go to a duke, a prince, not to me."

"We would be rich! Do you hear, my children? We are very poor, sir. You have only to look at us. Look at my poor daughter. She was once beautiful, fresh, gay. A year ago she fell ill: a long story, sir, and a sad one. We have had doctors; they have ordered five thousand things. My daughter gets no better. There it is, sir. We are very poor."

The young girl's look confirmed her mother's story. That she had been beautiful I could easily believe; that

she was ill was equally apparent. She was still remarkable indeed for a touching, hungry, unsatisfied grace. She remained silent and motionless, with her eyes fastened upon my face. I again examined the pretended Correggio. It was wonderfully like Miss Evans. The young American rose up in my mind with irresistible vividness and grace. How she seemed to glow with strength, freedom, and joy, beside this sombre, fading, Southern sister! It was a happy thought that, under the benediction of her image, I might cause a ray of healing sunshine to fall at this poor girl's feet.

"Have you ever tried to sell the picture before?"

"Never!" said the old lady, proudly. "My husband had it from his father. If we have made up our minds to part with it now, — most blessed little Madonna! — it is because we have had an intimation from heaven."

"From heaven?"

"From heaven, Signore. My daughter had a dream. She dreamed that a young stranger came to Vicenza, and that he wandered about the streets saying, 'Where, ah where, is my blessed Lady?' Some told him in one church, and some told him in another. He went into all the churches and lifted all the curtains, giving great fees to the sacristans! But he always came out shaking his head and repeating his question, 'Where is my blessed Lady? I have come from over the sea, I have come to Italy to find her!'" The woman delivered herself of this recital with a noble florid unction and a vast redundancy, to my Northern ear, of delightful liquid sounds. As she paused momentarily, her daughter spoke for the first time.

"And then I fancied," said the young girl, "that I heard his voice pausing under my window at night. 'His blessed Lady is here,' I said, 'we must not let him lose her.' So I called my brother and bade him go forth in search of you. I dreamed that he brought you back. We made an altar with candles and lace and

flowers, and on it we placed the little picture. The stranger had light hair, light eyes, a flowing beard like you. He kneeled down before the little Madonna and worshipped her. We left him at his devotions and went away. When we came back the candles on the altar were out: the Madonna was gone, too; but in its place there burned a bright pure light. It was a purse of gold!"

"What a very pretty story!" said I. "How many pieces were there in the purse?"

The young man burst into a laugh. "Twenty thousand!" he said.

I made my offer for the picture. It was esteemed generous apparently; I was cordially thanked. As it was inconvenient, however, to take possession of the work at that moment, I agreed to pay down but half the sum, reserving the other half to the time of delivery. When I prepared to take my departure the young girl rose from her chair and enabled me to measure at once her weakness and her beauty. "Will you come back for the picture yourself?" she asked.

"Possibly. I should like to see you again. You must get better."

"O, I shall never get better."

"I can't believe that. I shall perhaps have a dream to tell you!"

"I shall soon be in heaven. I shall send you one."

"Listen to her!" cried the mother. "But she is already an angel."

With a farewell glance at my pictured Madonna I departed. My visit to this little Vicenza household had filled me with a painful, indefinable sadness. So beautiful they all were, so civil, so charming, and yet so mendacious and miserable! As I hurried along in the train toward the briny cincture of Venice, my heart was heavy with the image of that sombre, dying Italian maiden. Her face haunted me. What fatal wrong had she suffered? What hidden sorrow had blasted the freshness of her youth? As I began to smell the nearing Adriatic, my fancy bounded forward to claim asylum in

the calmer presence of my bright American friend. I have no space to tell the story of my arrival in Venice and my first impressions. Mr. Evans had not mentioned his hotel. He was not at the Hotel de l'Europe, whither I myself repaired. If he was still in Venice, however, I foresaw that we should not fail to meet. The day succeeding my arrival I spent in a restless fever of curiosity and delight, now lost in the sensuous ease of my gondola, now lingering in charmed devotion before a canvas of Tintoretto or Paul Veronese. I exhausted three gondoliers and saw all Venice in a passionate fury and haste. I wished to probe its fulness and learn at once the best — or the worst. Late in the afternoon I disembarked at the Piazzetta and took my way haltingly and gazingly to the many-domed Basilica, — that shell of silver with a lining of marble. It was that enchanting Venetian hour when the ocean-touching sun sits melting to death, and the whole still air seems to glow with the soft effusion of his golden substance. Within the church, the deep brown shadow-masses, the heavy thick-tinted air, the gorgeous composite darkness, reigned in richer, quainter, more fantastic gloom than my feeble pen can reproduce the likeness of. From those rude concavities of dome and semi-dome, where the multitudinous facets of pictorial mosaic shimmer and twinkle in their own dull brightness; from the vast antiquity of innumerable marbles, incrusting the walls in roughly mated slabs, cracked and polished and triple-tinted with eternal service; from the wavy carpet of compacted stone, where a thousand once-bright fragments glimmer through the long attrition of idle feet and devoted knees; from sombre gold and mellow alabaster, from porphyry and malachite, from long dead crystal and the sparkle of undying lamps, — there proceeds a dense rich atmosphere of splendor and sanctity which transports the half-stupefied traveller to the age of a simpler and more awful faith. He lingered for half an hour beneath those

reverted cups of scintillating darkness, stumbling on the great stony swells of the pavement as I gazed upward at the long mosaic saints who curve gigantically with the curves of dome and ceiling. I had left Europe; I was in the East. An overwhelming sense of the sadness of man's spiritual history took possession of my heart. The clustering picturesque shadows about me seemed to represent the darkness of a past from which he had slowly and painfully struggled. The great mosaic images, hideous, grotesque, inhuman, glimmered like the cruel spectres of early superstitions and terrors. There came over me, too, a poignant conviction of the ludicrous folly of the idle spirit of travel. How with Murray and an opera-glass it strolls and stares where omniscient angels stand diffident and sad! How blunted and stupid are its senses! How trivial and superficial its imaginings! To this builded sepulchre of trembling hope and dread, this monument of mighty passions, I had wandered in search of pictorial effects. O vulgarity! Of course I remained, nevertheless, still curious of effects. Suddenly I perceived a very agreeable one. Kneeling on a low *prie-dieu*, with her hands clasped, a lady was gazing upward at the great mosaic Christ in the dome of the choir. She wore a black lace shawl and a purple hat. She was Miss Evans. Her attitude slightly puzzled me. Was she really at her devotions, or was she only playing at prayer? I walked to a distance, so that she might have time to move before I addressed her. Five minutes afterwards, however, she was in the same position. I walked slowly towards her, and as I approached her attracted her attention. She immediately recognized me and smiled and bowed, without moving from her place.

"I saw you five minutes ago," I said, "but I was afraid of interrupting your prayers."

"O, they were only half-prayers," she said.

"Half-prayers are pretty well for one

who only the other day was thanking Heaven that she was not a Catholic."

"Half-prayers are no prayers. I'm not a Catholic yet."

Her father, she told me, had brought her to the church, but had returned on foot to the hotel for his pocket-book. They were to dine at one of the restaurants in the Piazza. Mr. Evans was vastly contented with Venice, and spent his days and nights in gondolas. Awaiting his return, we wandered over the church. Yes, incontestably, Miss Evans resembled my little Vicenza picture. She looked a little pale with the heat and the constant nervous tension of sight-seeing; but she pleased me now as effectually as she had pleased me before. There was an even deeper sweetness in the freedom and breadth of her utterance and carriage. I felt more even than before that she was an example of woman active, not of woman passive. We strolled through the great Basilica in serious, charmed silence. Miss Evans told me that she had been there much: she seemed to know it well. We went into the dark Baptistery and sat down on a bench against the wall, trying to discriminate in the vaulted dimness the harsh mediæval reliefs behind the altar and the mosaic Crucifixion above it.

"Well," said I, "what has Venice done for you?"

"Many things. Tired me a little, saddened me, charmed me."

"How have you spent your time?"

"As people spend it. After breakfast we get into our gondola and remain in it pretty well till bedtime. I believe I know every canal, every canaletto, in Venice. You must have learned already how sweet it is to lean back under the awning, to feel beneath you that steady, liquid lapse, to look out at all this bright, sad elegance of ruin. I have been reading two or three of George Sand's novels. Do you know *La Dernière Aldini*? I fancy a romance in every palace."

"The reality of Venice seems to me to exceed all romance. It's romance enough simply to be here."

"Yes; but how brief and transient a romance!"

"Well," said I, "we shall certainly cease to be here, but we shall never cease to have been here. You are not to leave directly, I hope."

"In the course of ten days or a fortnight we go to Florence."

"And then to Rome?"

"To Rome and Naples, and then by sea, probably, to Genoa, and thence to Nice and Paris. We must be at home by the new year. And you?"

"I hope to spend the winter in Italy."

"Are you never coming home again?"

"By no means. I shall probably return in the spring. But I wish you, too, were going to remain."

"You are very good. My father pronounces it impossible. I have only to make the most of it while I'm here."

"Are you going back to Araminta?"

Miss Evans was silent a moment.

"O, don't ask!" she said.

"What kind of a place is Araminta?" I asked, maliciously.

Again she was silent. "That is John the Baptist on the cover of the basin," she said, at last, rising to her feet, with a light laugh.

On emerging from the Baptistry we found Mr. Evans, who greeted me cordially and insisted on my coming to dine with them. I think most fondly of our little dinner. We went to the Caff  Quadri and occupied a table beside an open window, looking out into the Piazza, which was beginning to fill with evening loungers and listeners to the great band of music in the centre. Miss Evans took off her hat and sat facing me in friendly silence. Her father sustained the larger burden of conversation. He seemed to feel its weight, however, as the dinner proceeded and when he had attacked his second bottle of wine. Miss Evans then questioned me about my journey from Milan. I told her the whole story, and felt that I infused into it a great deal of color and heat. She sat charming me forward with her steady, listening smile. For the first time in my

life I felt the magic of sympathy. After dinner we went down into the Piazza and established ourselves at one of Florian's tables. Night had become perfect; the music was magnificent. At a neighboring table was a group of young Venetian gentlemen, splendid in dress, after the manner of their kind, and glorious with the wondrous physical glory of the Italian race.

"They only need velvet and satin and plumes," I said, "to be subjects for Titian and Paul Veronese."

They sat rolling their dark eyes and kissing their white hands at passing friends, with smiles that were like the moon-flashes on the Adriatic.

"They are beautiful exceedingly," said Miss Evans; "the most beautiful creatures in the world, except—"

"Except, you mean, this other gentleman."

She assented. The person of whom I had spoken was a young man who was just preparing to seat himself at a vacant table. A lady and gentleman, elderly persons, had passed near him and recognized him, and he had uncovered himself and now stood smiling and talking. They were all genuine Anglo-Saxons. The young man was rather short of stature, but firm and compact. His hair was light and crisp, his eye a clear blue, his face and neck violently tanned by exposure to the sun. He wore a pair of small blond whiskers.

"Do you call him beautiful?" demanded Mr. Evans. "He reminds me of myself when I was his age. Indeed, he looks like you, sir."

"He's not beautiful," said Miss Evans, "but he is handsome."

The young man's face was full of decision and spirit; his whole figure had been moulded by action, tempered by effort. He looked simple and keen, upright, downright.

"Is he English?" asked Miss Evans, "or American?"

"He is both," I said, "or either. He is made of that precious clay that is common to the whole English-speaking race."

"He's American."

"Very possibly," said I; and indeed we never learned. I repeat the incident because I think it has a certain value in my recital. Before we separated I expressed the hope that we might meet again on the morrow.

"It's very kind of you to propose it," said Miss Evans; "but you'll thank us for refusing. Take my advice, as for an old Venetian, and spend the coming three days alone. How can you enjoy Tintoretto and Bellini, when you are racking your brains for small talk for me?"

"With you, Miss Evans, I should n't talk small. But you shape my programme with a liberal hand. At the end of three days, pray, where will you be?"

They would still be in Venice, Mr. Evans declared. It was a capital hotel, and then those jolly gondolas! I was unable to impeach the wisdom of the young girl's proposition. To be so wise, it seemed to me, was to be extremely charming.

For three days, accordingly, I wandered about alone. I often thought of Miss Evans and I often fancied I should enjoy certain great pictures none the less for that deep associated contemplation and those fine emanations of assent and dissent which I should have known in her society. I wandered far; I penetrated deep, it seemed to me, into the heart of Venetian power. I shook myself free of the sad and sordid present, and embarked on that silent contemplative sea whose irresistible tides expire at the base of the mighty canvases in the Scuola di San Rocco. But on my return to the hither shore, I always found my sweet young countrywoman waiting to receive me. If Miss Evans had been an immense coquette, she could not have proceeded more cunningly than by this injunction of a three days' absence. During this period, in my imagination, she increased tenfold in value. I don't mean to say that there were not hours together when I quite forgot her, and when I had no heart but for Venice and the lessons of Venice, for the sea and sky

and the great painters and builders. But when my mind had executed one of these great passages of appreciation, it turned with a sudden sense of solitude and lassitude to those gentle hopes, those fragrant hints of intimacy, which clustered about the person of my friend. She remained modestly uneclipsed by the women of Titian. She was as deeply a woman as they, and yet so much more of a person; as fit as the broadest and blondest to be loved for herself, yet full of serene superiority as an active friend. To the old, old sentiment what an exquisite modern turn she might give! I so far overruled her advice as that, with her father, we made a trio every evening, after the day's labors, at one of Florian's tables. Mr. Evans drank absinthe and discoursed upon the glories of our common country, of which he declared it was high time I should make the acquaintance. He was not the least of a bore: I relished him vastly. He was in many ways an excellent representative American. Without taste, without culture or polish, he nevertheless produced an impression of substance in character, keenness in perception, and intensity in will, which effectually redeemed him from vulgarity. It often seemed to me, in fact, that his good-humored tolerance and easy morality, his rank self-confidence, his nervous decision and vivacity, his fearlessness of either gods or men, combined in proportions of which the union might have been very fairly termed aristocratic. His voice, I admit, was of the nose, nasal; but possibly, in the matter of utterance, one eccentricity is as good as another. At all events, with his clear, cold gray eye, with that just faintly impudent, more than level poise of his ample chin, with those two hard lines which flanked the bristling wings of his gray moustache, with his general expression of unchallenged security and practical aptitude and incurious scorn of tradition, he impressed the sensitive beholder as a man of incontestable force. He was entertaining, too, partly

by wit and partly by position. He was weak only in his love of absinthe. After his first glass he left his chair and strolled about the piazza, looking for possible friends and superbly unconscious of possible enemies. His daughter sat back in her chair, her arms folded, her ungloved hands sustaining them, her prettiness half defined, her voice enhanced and subdued by the

gas-tempered starlight. We had infinite talk. Without question, she had an admirable feminine taste: she was worthy to know Venice. I remember telling her so in a sudden explosion of homage. "You are really worthy to know Venice, Miss Evans. We must learn to know it together. Who knows what hidden treasures we may help each other to find?"

H. James, Jr.

THE INTELLECTUAL INFLUENCE OF MUSIC.

WHATEVER doubt exists concerning the intellectual influence of music is chiefly due either to its alleged vagueness in comparison with speech, or to its emotional and sensuous qualities so seemingly opposed to the calm temper and "pale hue" of thought.

What does it mean? (*Sonate, que veux-tu?*) is asked after a fine sonata, symphony, or song without words, commonly by some one who has not enjoyed it, and who is not musical. It would be hard to tell him, and the interpretations of a dozen really sincere enthusiasts, stirred by it to the bottom of their hearts and fed as with heavenly manna, would be widely apart. The truth is, the meaning of music lies hidden in those deep, mysterious springs of every-day experience, which it were as vain to ignore as it is impossible to render into words. Music is finer than speech, and makes its appeal to a deeper somewhat in us underlying all thoughts of the understanding. Music expresses that part of our best and inmost consciousness, which needs such sympathetic, fluid, one might almost say electric, language as its tones alone afford. For it begins where speech leaves off; through it the inmost spirit — all that is inexpressible and yet of most account in us — can give sign of itself. Hence the loftiest poetry, the most inspired and subtle charm of conversation, in short, that magical some-

thing which distinguishes the utterances of genius in its high hour, in whatsoever form, is analogous to music and sets the fine chords vibrating in somewhat the same way. The higher ranges of Coleridge's conversation are described by his nephew, in the Preface to the "Table-Talk," in terms which one might use who had been sitting under the spell of Mendelssohn or Chopin: "I have seen him at times when you could not incarnate him, — when he shook aside your petty questions or doubts, and burst with some impatience through the obstacles of common conversation. Then, escaped from the flesh, he would soar upwards into an atmosphere almost too rare to breathe, but which seemed proper to *him*, and there he would float at ease. Like enough, what Coleridge then said his subtlest listener would not understand as a man understands a newspaper; but upon such a listener there would steal an influence, and an impression, and a sympathy; there would be a gradual attempering of his body and spirit, till his total being vibrated with one pulse alone, and thought became merged in contemplation: —

"And so, his senses gradually wrapt
In a half-sleep, he'd dream of better worlds,
And dreaming hear thee still, O singing lark,
That sangest like an angel in the clouds!"

Did you never step within the portal of a vast and crowded church in the

hour of prayer? In vain you sought to catch the syllables of the far-off, pale, spiritual-looking man. What if you could not hear them? You heard *him*; his tones, his spirit, took possession of your spirit, till, losing thought of self, it went up with the rest. Of that sort is the eloquence, the influence of music. Nothing does more for culture than the personal presence, the magnetic sphere as it were which one in whom the spirit and result of higher culture are embodied bears about with him. The presence of good music is the presence of a good spirit. The presence of deep and earnest music is essentially the presence of the deep and earnest spirit who composed it,—a presence felt more surely than his words or looks could be. There is frivolous, idle music, and there is pedantic music. There is also music, more than one mind may compass, which is altogether the outpouring of the hopes, the prayers, the faith, the very lives of men like Handel, Bach, Mozart, or Beethoven. It is good to have them with us; and in no way could we have them so near as in their undying harmonies, not so evanescent but that generation after generation can recall them, all alive and new as if they never had been heard before. Music is an expression of character, of the moods, the spirit, the meaning of the man that makes it. His words can only tell the meaning of his thoughts; his actions, the meaning of his present purpose; his music tells the meaning of *him*. Through one symphony you get a clearer insight into a being like Beethoven than through any life of him that could be written. Not much acquaintance can you have with Bach or Mozart, through biographies, unless you know their music and can read that, all the while, between the lines.

Music has an atmospheric influence. In earliest childhood such influence is felt. The very infant is affected by it; we care not that he understand or even seem to heed or listen. And each composer's music is a peculiar atmosphere, as much so as the atmosphere

of pine woods or fresh fields. The sensibilities, the character, the tone of feeling, the aspirations, the habitual consciousness of the child, will be affected by it, and all his after-life be redolent of it. Beethoven or Mozart may be introduced as an invisible presiding genius over his earliest education, before other teachers can begin to reach him, or any thoughts shall have begun to shape themselves in his unconscious mind.

All very well, you say, in theory; but look at facts and persons. Were your musical classmates, are your musical friends and neighbors, are the musicians of your town, distinguished as a class for intellectuality? How many of your great tone-masters, even, seem to be persons of no culture! How little they can talk on intellectual, moral, social topics! How innocent of all book knowledge, and how helpless in high conversation! And so on.

Yet we could give instances where, could you know the persons nearly and what spirit they are of, you might be forced to own that mere music may serve as a virtual equivalent for other culture,—holding in itself much other culture in solution as it were. For there we seem to have the *essence* of it all. You will note sometimes in the simplest remark of one of these thoroughly musical natures, one of these so steeped in harmonies, but ignorant of books, and so unused to cultivated circles,—nay, in a mere smile or lighting of the eye or least expression of the face,—how right to the heart and centre of a thought their quick instinct, intuition, strikes, how they see the *gist* of the matter in anticipation of the hint. For, somehow, in fine music they have been baptized into the spirit of the highest thought, without the tedious intervention of the letter and the syllogism. The musical soul is gifted with a rare divining power. If the best of Bach, Beethoven, Chopin has passed into one, and there become assimilated with his inmost life and individuality, what culture can he lack that would seem rich enough

to covet in exchange for this! And all the more by virtue of this one unspeakable possession (whether he possess or is possessed), will he be sensitively open, heart and mind, to every hint of truth and beauty in nature, in poetry and art, in history, philosophy, or science. Preoccupied with one, as every earnest person must be in his way with something, does he renounce his birthright to the rest?

But let us not admit too much, since other culture is not hard to find in men who live for the most part in music.

During these last years, if not before, the reading world has had occasion to become acquainted with a goodly number of musicians who also were good writers and good talkers. Not a few of them have written books, and successful ones, though some of them may never have intended it. Mendelssohn's letters, sought in all the circulating libraries, though written to familiar friends, without the slightest literary purpose, show a literary faculty, a cleverness of thought and observation, a quick and fine appreciation of what passes, quite as remarkable perhaps as the Note-Books of Hawthorne. Schumann wrote only about music, but wrote like a man of culture and a thinker, fresh, original, and rich in illustration. The letters of some earlier great composers, — Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, — which have been dragged to light of late to gratify the craving for whatever smallest personal relic can be found of men so perfectly revealed in their creations, though not to be judged at all as literature, do certainly afford glimpses here and there into most interesting character and intellectual traits of brightness not outmatched in other spheres. The Ritter Gluck knew how to explain the æsthetic principles which lay at the foundation of his classic operas with such clear logic and such fortunate expression as the case required; and Richard Wagner, who would fain push those principles too far, finds even now far readier audience as controversial pamphleteer and critic than he does for "Lohen-

grin," the "Meistersinger," or the "Nibelungen" trilogy. Weber, even if he had not composed "Der Freyschütz," "Oberon," and "Euryanthe," would have won a name by his æsthetic-romantic and fantastic writings, mostly of the kind called fugitive. More lately, Ferdinand Hiller, Hector Berlioz, and Liszt have written frequently and well, each with a fascinating individuality, all in a genial vein, full of enthusiasm and of *bonhomie*, and with fine discrimination, showing abundant evidence of minds well stored with general knowledge, on every page betraying genuine sympathy as well as personal acquaintance with poets, artists, men of thought and genius in all spheres. A more beautiful, poetic, chivalrous, appreciative tribute to the genius and the country of a brother artist than Liszt's noble monograph on Chopin were hard to find in any literature. Even the gay, mercenary, convivial Rossini, if he wrote no books, was quoted universally for his fine wit and observation; nor did he, as Hiller reports him daily for a season, lack higher powers of thoughtful conversation. Some of the recent German musicians, who have written on the principles and method of their art, have shown themselves well versed in modern metaphysical ideas and systems; for instance, Marx and Hauptmann. Joachim, the great violinist, asked all manner of questions, with most eager interest, about our Emerson, and showed an intimate acquaintance with his works; it was the genuine response of one free, large, fearless, truthful mind to another.

And so we might go on with instances, if there were need of more to prove that the musical passion, musical genius, "inspiration," is not a kind of preternatural secretion of all the mental faculties into one unduly developed organ at the expense of all the rest, and that a man, however much absorbed in music, need not be a moral weakling or a fool, or a poor "Blind Tom" in kind, if not degree. It were a pretty problem for the idle hours of any of these doubters, — who talk

so pitiably of intellectual and moral weakness as the price of musical indulgence,—to contemplate the difference between Blind Tom and, say, Sebastian Bach! Bach and Handel both, in their way, too, were totally absorbed in music,—mere musicians so far as we can know, their whole gigantic force of heart and mind and will spending itself in that direction,—only to some purpose! Greater musicians, greater men, than these who, in this more self-conscious age, write books as well as symphonies, they have left no other sign but their great music. No one will doubt the greatness or the soundness of such intellects. Beethoven and Mozart must be joined with them, giant intelligences likewise, whose whole vitality was spent in music, and without conscious literary gift, though much be found so interesting in the letters which they would have burned could they have known the curiosity and love of publication of the age to come after them. (Let us be thankful that they did not know it.) There have been giants in our own days,—Mendelssohn at least, and Schumann; but the giants of those days were greater, and they wrote not books; they were all music. Does this prove against us? On the contrary, it proves that music of itself is sphere enough for the completest exercise of such sublime intelligences, nay, such grand types of character, as only find their peers in Homer, Dante, Shakespeare, Raphael, Michel-Angelo, or Milton. There is idle lotus-eating, sickly sentimental vanity, shallow *dilettanteism* enough in music as in other arts and literature; no less, no more; and it is even found in much which tries to fancy itself religion, spirituality, life hidden in a better world. *Dilettante* is precisely the name that has been given to the idle, selfish, weak indulger in all or any of these spheres; but to be an artist, or even an amateur (or faithful lover), that implies some earnestness, some bending of the faculties, with strength of will, to worthy purpose.

Music a self-indulgent, pleasurable weakness, do you say? Makes a man a listless, shiftless dreamer, unfit for life's stern business, and to be counted a mere cipher by the world's self-elected governing committees? Enough to point for answer to the lives and labors of the great composers; to their sufferings too, their willing martyrdom to the ideal of their art; their whole-souled loyalty to duty such as in the sure and strong bent of their genius God gave *them* to do. For this they could dispense with what the mass of men deem indispensable. Think what Bach actually did, and Handel; how Bach, in tranquil, cheerful, unambitious daily round of service, like a true priest who keeps the altar fire forever burning, tasked all his strength and mighty genius to the utmost, composing for each Sabbath in that Leipsic Thomas-Kirche, and for all the festivals besides, through six long years, a new cantata, comprising orchestral symphony, chorals, which he alone has harmonized so perfectly, elaborate choruses, and recitatives and airs for single voices, each upon a scale of magnitude equal to that of a mass, or one of the two or three parts of an oratorio, and all in the noblest and most learned style of composition,—works to live forever, yet sung then only once and laid away to be explored and published for the first time now, a century since he lived! There they lie, the manuscript scores of some three hundred of them, in the Royal Library at Berlin, any one of them a task beyond the power of any master of our own day. Think of the seemingly endless series of huge volumes of his works in all forms which the "Bach Gesellschaft," year by year, for sixteen years now, have been bringing out, while the heap of manuscripts unedited seems scarcely yet to be diminished. And in all this not a page which a true criticism would leave out as being either trivial or commonplace; the whole of it sincere and wholesome music, the heartfelt expression of the deepest piety, and moulded in the clear, though com-

plex and subtle forms peculiar to a loyal master mind that had attained to know and reverence the divine law and secret of all form.

Think of Handel creating all those oratorios after thirty years of intense toil in composing, rehearsing, and bringing out Italian operas at the rate of two or three each year!—Handel, a people's man, compared with Bach, who loved the light, while Bach lived in the shade, and who was much more in his element while facing the great world. Think of the brave old giant, after he grew blind, conducting the performance of his "Israel" or "Messiah" at the organ, improvising such organ accompaniment as it is scarcely within the skill of modern musicianship to replace, his huge wig vibrating, they say, with satisfaction when the whole went to his mind! Or think how Mozart *consumed* himself in musical creation, and died so young, apparently, only because the tree had borne all the wondrous fruit required of it, because he had fairly done the work, achieved the mission, of the longest life in five-and-thirty years! And Beethoven! What shall we say of him, writing his greatest works after he had entirely lost the sense of hearing? Was not that intellectual labor, and of the greatest kind, whether we judge it by the spiritual and mental chemistry which organized the works without the aid of sense, in him, or by their influence on the world? Schubert, Bellini, Weber, Mendelssohn, great workers all, died young; for real life and work of the purely intellectual, inspired kind are not to be measured by length of years. And the same is true in a great degree of the *Dii minores*, minor characters, in music; this constancy of mental application, this earnest concentration of the higher faculties, is found in them; nor in composers only, but in humblest teachers, village organists, amateur enthusiasts.

Music may run into frivolity, may be coupled with immodesty, and with sheer atheism, that makes a jest of honesty, believing in no good, as in the

opéra bouffe of Offenbach; but music in itself has no such tendency. It can be gay, light-hearted, droll, and set the soul free from its mortal clogs awhile by exquisite and graceful fancies, such as sparkle in Rossini's comic operas, but never did it wear filthy channels for itself. Hold not the art guilty of the base uses trade and luxury would put it to. Music for music's sake is one thing, is divine; "sensational" music another and of other origin; its spring is mercenary, not sincerely musical.

There is another prejudice against musicians on the score of "eccentricities," "exceptional behavior," "disappointing" personal appearance, etc. Such hopeless "impracticables"! Beethoven's "moroseness," his absent-mindedness (forgetting to order his dinner while he sat in the restaurant for hours); Handel's "huge appetite," for truly the giant had two attributes of Homer's heroes in a high degree, capacity for anger and for eating (as it were, whole hecatombs)! absence of mind in Schumann too, and in Franz Schubert, alternating in the latter with a wild Bohemian conviviality, the great work going on within him somehow all the while; Chopin's morbid and unreasonable sensitiveness; and many more such contradictions might be named; yet really not more, we fancy, than among famous painters, sculptors, poets, psychologists, and men of science, men of business, and even some whom the pious world has sainted. But music presupposes a harmonic, truer sort of life than society has realized as yet; and so for answer we may say: These great musicians lived too early; they were prophets in their way; in actual outward life but ill at home in a world not ready for them,—a world so selfish and antagonistic. *Their* souls were strung up to heaven's concert pitch; it was the age, the world around them, that was false and gave out an uncertain and bewildering sound.

Schubert, they say, haunted the wine-shop; sought seclusion, sought escape from *bored* (whom, chiefly of all mortal ills, he dreaded), in what seemed dull

and sensual leisure. There he would find free play of thought and room for shaping fancy. There, as we said, the work went on within, the new song sang itself, the symphony was growing into form. He was convivial and fond of friends, recklessly generous, "felt himself a Cræsus when he had sold a song or two." And when the generous liquor loosed his tongue, with what fearless frankness, what subtle, withering satire, he would tell pretenders to the name of artist what he thought of them! Then again he could sit dumb and vacant to appearance, quiescent, passive as an oyster. But was there not a pearl in that oyster? What if that pearl should chance to be the glorious great Symphony in C, that of the "heavenly length," as Schumann said of it, which here in our own city has held thousands of listeners in rapt, exalted mood so often in the Music Hall! What if it were full of pearls! How many, as it now appears, of purest lustre, did he, careless of fame or publishers, leave hid away in corners, now first brought to light! Which is the real Schubert, the oyster or the pearl?

Perhaps, considering all that these men have *done*, and what they are to us and will be to mankind for ages, the all-sufficient, simple excuse for the contradiction is, it proves them *human*, and makes them doubly ours.

We have been speaking of composers, real composers, great ones. If the brain-work they did was so vast in quantity, so intense in energy, so sublime in quality, so far-reaching in influence, so historic, precious to the heart of ages, it surely proves the intellectual-ity of the tone-art itself, the element in which they wrought, and in which *we* too feel free, clear, high, and happy, nearer heaven, while we listen to and love their inexhaustible creations. It is great to do these things, is it not great to have and use and love them when done, as long as they will last?—and that would seem to be forever. What it was good to give, is it not good also to receive, and yield us to its charm, and woo its influence?

And if this imply a certain passiveness of mind, abandonment of will on our part, are we less passive, are we more intellectual under the spell of poems or whatever kind of high discourse?

Now here we have to meet perhaps the most respectable of all the phases of the scepticism with regard to music. It has its spring in certain sensitive consciences, persons intelligently, sincerely musical, but with a proneness to self-accusation when they find themselves enjoying. These, while they own their hearts are moved, as the flushed face and glistening eyes testify, while they admit the claim of music to be called the language of the heart, with power to melt, transport, instead of reasoning and convincing, appear to fancy that they but disparage it by such admission. They say it is a sentimental rather than an intellectual mood to which it ministers; that it is a matter of mere feeling and emotion; below the intellectual, the voluntary, moral principle, inferior to poetry, philosophy, or doctrine, since in it we simply yield ourselves to passive rapture. Strange if one could always enjoy tasting fruit, and never planting!

It is common to define music as the natural language of feeling, while words are the expression of ideas, of thoughts. And so, indeed, it is; but not in a mere sentimental sense; for do we not distinguish between music which awakens feelings wholesome, high, impersonal, and more allied to intellect than sense, enamored not with pleasure solely, but with truth, and beauty as a type and symbol of the highest truth, and music which is shallow, maudlin, commonplace in its expression, attractive to the selfish, sentimental, vulgar mind? The truest feeling, such as true art, true music breathes and makes appeal to, is of a more intellectual temper. Heart quickens brain; then thought reacts on feeling, and carries it up to a sense of perfect order, to a holy love and yearning after unity.

It by no means covers the whole significance of music to call it the lan-

guage of feeling; though, rightly understood, there might not be a higher definition. The poet truly sings,

"Thought is deeper than all speech,
Feeling deeper than all thought."

But then he means the feeling which *is* "deep," and which relates us to the highest universal ends of being. Now musical art, to be sure, does not describe objects, nor narrate histories, nor unfold cosmogonies and systems of philosophy and ethics, as some imaginative expounders of "Ninth Symphonies" would have us think. It does not express ideas, except of the kind technically known as *musical ideas*, pregnant little germs of melody, capable of logical development in a way analogous to the development of thoughts. And here, by way of caution, lest we be misunderstood in claiming that music is intellectual and has meaning, we would take occasion once for all to wash our hands of all responsibility for that kind of musical interpretation which seeks to trace a story, a mythology, a thread of doctrine, throughout such or such a symphony, sonata, or "tone-poem"; and to express our conviction that music stoops from its proper, higher mission when it undertakes to describe scenes or imitate sounds in nature; and that it is never less intellectual, or more regardless of its own chaste integrity, than when it takes the form of "programme music," not trusting its own proper element, but borrowing chances of effect *ab extra*, and dividing the attention as if to cover its own insufficiency. Music must be sufficient in itself. The highest kind of music is *pure* music, that which lives and moves in purely musical ideas. Yet nothing is more natural than to try to describe the effect upon you of a piece of music by calling up such images, associations, trains of thought, analogous effects in other spheres, as it may have awakened in your mind. You clutch at all these feeble helps in your enthusiastic, vain endeavors to describe the witching thing. This you may do legitimately, so long as you profess no more, and do

not try to reverse the order, and make it appear that the music was written to describe your thought. For here we find the true relation between thought and feeling in the sphere of music. Music in one sense describes, by awakening the feelings with which objects, thoughts, experiences, are inevitably associated; every such feeling may of course awaken many images and many memories in many minds; but there will be, at least, some vague analogy, affinity between them; so that music, even of the most pure and abstract sort (such as a stringed quartette by Mozart) is always heard to best advantage on the fit occasion. If it be wedded to words, as in a song, an opera, an oratorio, these in a measure must determine its expression, though it bring out new meanings such as the words alone could hardly have conveyed. Yet take the words away, the music could not be translated into them, would not enable you to find them, though it would put you in a state of mind and feeling in which those or kindred thoughts and words might offer themselves most aptly.

This brings us to the heart of the matter. Leaving objections, we come back to positive statement. The highest definition of music, its full significance and worth, is to be sought mainly in the highest kind of music; that is to say, *pure* music, dealing in purely musical ideas, conscious of no outward purpose, content in its own world, preoccupied with its own peculiar mission, which is too divine to need the justification of any end to serve. This, indeed, is the first principle of truth in art of any kind.

In this we find the intellectuality of music. For music, in this view, is the most abstract, pure embodiment and type of universal law and movement. It is a key to the divine method throughout all the ordered distribution of the worlds of matter and of spirit. It is the most fluid, free expression of form, in the *becoming* (what the Germans call *das Werden*); form developing according to intrinsic and divine

necessity. There is nothing arbitrary in music; no acquiring any power in it except by patient, reverent study and mastering of divine proportions and the eternal laws of fitness. Goethe says: "The worth of art appears most eminent in music, since it requires no *material*, no *subject-matter*, whose effect must be deducted; it is wholly *form* and *power*, and it raises and ennobles whatever it expresses."

Hence the study of the laws of fugue and counterpoint, the subtle art of what is called the *polyphonic* interweaving of the *parts* in harmony, the learning to develop out of a little melodic phrase of theme or motive, as from a seed thought, all the wealth of meaning and of beauty there concealed and waiting for the touch of fairy wand of genius, is at least as good a kind of higher intellectual gymnastics as the transcendental mathematics, or the categorical chains of logic, or the perpetually shifting, vanishing cloud-forms of metaphysics. Good music has a logic of its own; none more severe, more subtle, and surely none so fascinating, for it leads, it charms into the Infinite.

Even to contemplate the elementary phenomena in nature, upon which all the wonders of the musical art are founded, is to find ourselves in presence of enchanting facts, of laws so intellectual, so inexhaustible in their suggestion, such startling revelations of an infinitely beautiful organic, all-pervading, living order, that the soul is filled with awe as if the very air were tremulous with Deity. For what is music? Its substance, common air. Its form, vibration. All beauty, in whatever art, is the result, the impressed form of motion,—free, unimpeded, even motion; and motion, movement, is the universal sign and undeniable assertion of force, of power, of inspiration, in a word, of life; and, finally, all free, undisturbed motion is vibratory, undulating, measured, proportionate, rhythmical. Physically, then, music is motion, and it is nothing else. And nothing moves that does not im-

press upon the air a vibration, or (which is the same thing) a sound, a *tone*. If I sing to you, a vibration of my soul, my feeling, imparts itself to the atmospheric medium, travelling on until it becomes a vibration in *your* soul, your feeling. The spiritual fact of music answers to this physical fact. Its business is directly with the motive principle in human life, and not with thoughts, perceptions, memories; for these are passive, prompted by some motive force behind them.

Vibrations beget vibrations; a vibrating chord or column of air divides into vibrating portions of itself, whose tones a fine ear will detect, mysteriously, faintly blending, harmonizing with the parent tone as it dies out. Thus one tone generates a whole series of tones, and we have virtually all tones in one. The first begotten and the most distinctly audible are those two, which, on being reduced within the compass of one octave, form with the principal its third and fifth,—and then we have that never-fading miracle, the *trichord*, which is the soul and substance of all harmony. Hauptmann (quoting Goethe, "*Jedes natürliche ist ein frisch ausgesprochenes Wort Gottes*") says the trichord is "a word of God"; and who that heard the clear, fresh voices of ten thousand children in the "Coliseum" when they, after holding out a long, pure tone in unison, suddenly struck the blended tones of the trichord,—purity itself, like the white beam of "holy light" divided by the prism,—will not heartily agree with him? Three trichords, based respectively on the principal or keynote, its first "over-tone" or fifth, and the tone of which it is itself the fifth, give all the tones of the diatonic musical scale; in other words, the operative melodic scale is really a mingling of three harmonic scales or series of tones generated by the first vibration; and this trine origin, this "trinity" of the scale, carries in it the germ of all the possibilities of harmony, indeed, the whole beautiful secret of all musical development. Rhythm, too, lay coyly hidden

in these same vibrations of the primal tone, and knew by instinct how to regulate the time career, the onflow of the tune, the composition as a whole, by measured intermittent stress or accent, so that it all should run in waves as uniformly as the "tone-waves" of the air which waft the message of each single tone upon the ear. Given the diatonic scale, which tempts continually to modulation, change, excursion among tones; given beforehand, with it, that earlier, original harmonic scale of tones first generated by the vibrations of a ground-tone ("over-tones") to hold this free propensity still back to unity, as well as furnish samples of most pleasing and harmonic intervals (thirds, sixths, etc.); add to these rhythm, and lo! Melody is born. And harmony is not far off: for can the stream forget its source? Here too "the child is father of the man." And now is music fully armed, to leap forth like Minerva from the brain of Jove. Now out of the harmonious strife of melody and harmony we presently shall see spring up all sorts of kaleidoscopic hints of *imitation* (themes, motives, bits of motives, echoed or reflected from one part to another of the harmony); sharp-flavored passing discords, piquing expectation, pressing to solution; all the arts of polyphonic interweaving of the parts, each part pursuing its own independent, individual, melodic way, yet all enforcing, celebrating the one common theme, co-operating to one end; in short, the whole development—as beautiful and wonderful as growth of plant or crystal—of counterpoint and fugue and all the inner structural and outer architectural varieties of form which music has from time to time assumed, and some of which she cherishes forever; till, donning finally her rainbow robe of many colors, she thrones herself upon the orchestra and shines forth in her crowning glory in the consummate form of forms, the Symphony.

Thus logically, as tree from germ, out of the first tone ("word of God") that ever rang, may we deduce the

art of music in its infinite varieties, all singing, pleading for and prophesying UNITY, as the grand hope of human mind and heart, the highest word of science and religion. Here is no room, of course, for the history, any more than for the theory of music. Yet this exceedingly brief hint of its origin, at least, was quite essential to our argument. Such origin and such development who can fairly contemplate, and for a moment longer doubt the intellectuality of music?

As there is nothing arbitrary in music of itself, in music as a science, so too there is nothing arbitrary, or merely accidental, in its true forms of art. And here, before concluding, we would dwell a moment upon two of the more important forms, which are too commonly imagined to be arbitrary experiments, inventions of one man, indolently aped by others, fashions of too long a day, doomed to be swept away with other traditional rubbish of the past; but which we believe to have grown out of the very nature of things,—types moulded into shape by a necessity intrinsic and enduring.

The first is the FUGUE FORM. The fugue is the vital principle of musical form; it is the prime secret of all form, the very soul of it. Whatever music does not more or less imply the fugue principle, though it need not be strict fugue, is likely to be poor and shallow music. For fugue is but the logical development of what is latent in a germ or theme. It is in music what the spiral law of growth is in the plant. It has its prototypes in nature: in the surf billows rolling up the beach; in the waves that run along a field of grain before the wind; in the widening vortex of the whirlpool and the waterspout; in the tongues of flame losing themselves and reappearing as the fire soars and seeks the sky. It has its correspondences in other arts; in nothing, perhaps, so strikingly as in those wonderful creations of religious architecture, which are the furthest removed from mere mechanics and geometry, which speak so to the soul

and the imagination, and almost seem alive and growing, as it were yearning, reaching, soaring upward while we look at them,—the old Gothic churches. There we *see* the fugue in solid form; that is what Madame De Staël meant when she called architecture “frozen music”; there we find the same precision of minute detail, the same endless echoing and imitation of motives and parts of motives, phrases, with quaint particulars; a thousand pointed arches, clustered columns, cunning tracery, and, peeping out of unexpected corners, exquisite or grotesque shapes of plants, of men, of animals, and monsters, as if to include all the images that ever filled the waking thoughts or dreams of man in history,—all aspiring, growing to a climax, yet to the mind still hinting further growth, still seeming in the process of *becoming*, never absolutely *done*; utmost finish in detail mechanically, actually, but ideally suggesting still the Infinite, the unattainable in time. This suggestion of the Infinite is what we would call the *expression* of the fugue. (Only, to be expressive, it must be a fugue of genius.)

Yes, in music, the fugue is the perfect type of unity in variety. It is nature's own law; the true instinct of genius felt it out, obeyed it unconsciously by the inmost necessity of art and of its own soul. True to nature, genius could not do otherwise; it was simply letting germs, seed-thoughts (*motives* technically) *grow*. To be bound always strictly to the fugue form is pedantry; but not to know it, not to feel it, not to imply it even in free composition, is to forsake the real fount of inspiration. All the great composers, the real creators whose works live forever,—Beethoven, for instance, who did not very often write fugues *as such*,—working by a true instinct with nature and the divine laws of essential form, or unity, still imply the fugue in whatever form they write; they have its secret in them, its law is in their hearts, the soul of all their method; indeed, so familiar are they with

it, that they need not literally present it. It lay at the basis of their culture. No one is fairly master of the free forms, until he is master of the fugue. That is, wherever there is harmony, wherever there is more than one *part*, true art dictates that the parts move individually, that there be some contrapuntal texture. Where Counterpoint sits down to work, Fugue looks over its shoulders.

And now we see why one never exhausts the interest of a good fugue. There have been plenty of mechanical, dry fugues, results of plodding calculation, ingenious, learned, but without much expression. But there are also live ones; a live one never gets hackneyed, never dogs and persecutes the mind like tunes in fashion, which the street-organs keep forever murdering, but will not bury. Mere melody has in it a principle of decay; it stales by repetition; and therefore the music that proclaims the Infinite, the great religious music from of old, has worn the undecaying form of fugue and counterpoint. For fugue *treats* its theme, develops, “works” it up in such a noble way that it becomes a perpetual renovation and new illustration of itself, and so invests it with perennial youth and freshness: it can no more *bore* you now than can the themes, the motives, multiplied, repeated, echoed, imitated, or contrasted throughout the whole upward floating, spirit-like, scarcely material mass of a Strasbourg or Cologne cathedral. All its possibilities of repetition are provided for, anticipated in this structural development, this contrapuntal transfiguration, lifting it into a purer atmosphere beyond reach of the curse of commonplace, so that it cannot spoil. Right healthy music are the fugues of Bach, and hearty too; no sickly sentimentality there; no poor ambition for effect; but sincere expression always of deep, genuine, religious feeling. To him the fugue form had become a native, pliant, and obedient language, in which he could express himself most readily; and between one fugue and another of

his there is a wide range of expression, from airy, fairy fancy to deepest tenderness, to holy meditation, to noon-day brightness of sublimest joy. Expression you will find too, as well as learning, in many more of the old fuguists. A century before Bach, the fugues of Frescobaldi, chapel-master at St. Peter's, in Rome, breathe a delicate and tender sentiment. So do some by Bach's pupil, Kirnberger. Handel, too, was grand in fugue, but far less various than Bach. Nor was his nature quite at home in so interior and mystical an element. Mozart, consummate master in all music, could not write without expression. A deep, musing sort of feeling goes with subtle art in the fugues of the older Scarlatti. Then there were the sons of Bach; nor even in such types of learned and severe musicianship as Albrechtsberger and the Padre Martini is the fugue always dry and unsuggestive.

The fugue form pertains more to internal and organic structure in one homogeneous musical piece or movement. Our other example of form shall be one of what we may term architectural *massing* of several movements in a great symmetrical musical whole. Look at the SYMPHONY, or what is technically called the SONATA form; common to sonatas, symphonies, trios, stringed quartettes, classical concertos, etc.

This form, too, we say, is not mere accident or imitation of one man's success beyond its reasonable term of life. The reason of it is to be sought in the nature of the human soul and in the corresponding nature of music.

How is it with us when a matter interests us and excites us to that pitch of feeling in which music steps in as the natural language? Our whole nature is engaged in it. The head, or thinking principle; the heart, or feeling, loving principle; the will, or active principle; and more or less (amid these earnest powers) the lively, recreative play of fancy, — all take part in it, all in turn are principally addressed by it. Reason, passion, frolic humor, will: these seek each its type and representative in the

forms of an art so perfectly human and so pliant to the motions of the human soul as music. If a matter taxes our reasoning, truth-seeking faculties for one spell, it is a law of our nature that we then quit thinking and only *feel* about it for another spell. We modulate out of the dialectic into the religious and accepting mood. It *was* an argument, an emulous labor of the brain; it has become a lyric of the heart, a prayer, a hymn, a softly rising incense and aroma of the faith and love and longing in us. And then, the more we have been in earnest, the more naturally comes the reaction of frolic fantasy and humor, the more lively the suggestions and "heat-lightnings" of a quick, surcharged, midsummer fancy, — the *scherzo* humors that so often flash from characters of deepest pathos. But the circle of moods is not yet complete. Thought, feeling, fancy, are but phases of the living stream that yet must ultimate itself in action, must rush into *deed*, and so pour its life into the great ocean whence all proceed and to which all tend. That is the *finale*. Now for the musical correspondence.

The first, or allegro movement of a symphony, takes up a theme, or themes, and proceeds to their discussion and elaboration. It begins with a principal *theme* or subject; presently, with the natural modulation into the dominant or relative key, comes in a *counter theme*; these two are developed and contrasted a little way, when the whole passage is literally repeated to fix them firmly in the mind. Then begins a sort of analytic canvassing of all that they contain; fragments, phrases of the one are blended with or off-set against the other; the two propositions (often waking up a number of accessory subjects by the way) are subjected to a sort of exhaustive musical logic, till what is in them is brought fully out and verified. By a sort of refining, differentiating, intellectual argumentation these themes are held up in various lights, are developed singly and in contrast, and are worked through various keys, abridgments, augmentations, episodes, digres-

sions, into a most various and complex whole, in which the same original threads or themes continually reappear, yet with perpetual sense of novelty. The intellectual principle delights in analysis, in the detection of differences and distinctions. So the symphonic allegro betrays a tendency to continual divergence and escape from the first starting-point. Here is an art type of *discussion*, whose whole aim and tendency is unity and truth. What a type of catholicity in thought! Discussion, no denial; music is incapable of that; Mephistopheles in music must make sad work, or forget his nature.

Then comes the *adagio*, *larghetto*, *andante*,—some slow movement, which has more of calm, still feeling and unquestioning religion in it. This is the central sanctuary in this musical abridgment of man's life, which every good symphony appears to be. This the heart; that the head.

The serious *andante* passes, — sometimes directly, sometimes through the frolic *scherzo*, and the *minuet* and *trio*, — into the *rondo finale*, which is rapid and full of the spirit and preparation for action, full of resolve and fire. The sentiment which has passed through the crucible of the judgment in the *allegro*, and sought its divine repose at the religious altar of feeling in the *adagio*, having traversed its intellectual and its effective phases, now puts on its armor and moves on with alacrity for action. (Though, in many lighter symphonies, it is more like a school-boy pulling on his hat and rushing out of doors in pure animal spirits.) It seems to act itself out with buoyant confidence; sometimes with sublime triumph, as in the march concluding the C Minor Symphony.

Such is the model or typical form of a symphony, or a sonata. We do not say, all symphonies must closely conform to it; no two things in nature are precisely alike, no two leaves upon a tree, no two human forms or faces; but every one, with more or less diver-

gence, illustrates its own proper type. And, be it remembered, we are citing only one of many admirable great forms of music, — greater and truer in that they are not arbitrary, but determined by intrinsic reason and necessity, and therefore enduring. Search into the secret, then, of musical form, and you will learn other secrets, learn much of yourself, of the divine organic method in the material and moral universe. Said we not rightly that music is as good a school for intellectual discipline as mathematics, logic, or philosophy?

But the superior potency of these studies in musical form appears in this: that they are æsthetical as well as abstract; they are imaginative and free in absolute obedience to law; they seek beauty as an end, and pour forth glowing feeling from the heart, while they so finely illustrate the method of the universe, the principle of one in all. And so (even without the theoretic study as such), by mere familiar intimacy with such forms, such music in the concrete, by frequent listening to the beautiful sonatas, overtures, and symphonies, till we become possessed with them, informed with their own spirit, our instincts get attuned into a sympathy with universal law and unity. Here is an intellectual culture, where intellect as it were rises into sentiment, and the two are henceforth one; where scientific, dry analysis blooms out and fructifies into poetic, loving synthesis. Indeed, may not this be, perhaps, the highest kind of intellectual culture: this cultivation not so much of reasoning or perceptive powers, as of *the harmonic mood* and temper; this disposing and attuning of the whole mind to law, to the perpetual embrace of truth in beauty?

At once emotional and intellectual in so pure a sense, music with good right has been called a universal language, and, above all, the native language (so to speak) of the religious sentiment. This aspect of the subject claims consideration, but not now.

John S. Dwight.

A NOVEMBER PASTORAL.

I.

WRAPPED in his sad-colored cloak, the Day, like a Puritan, standeth
Stern in the joyless fields, rebuking the lingering color,—
Dying hectic of leaves and the chilly blue of the asters,—
Hearing, perchance, the croak of a crow on the desolate tree-top,
Breathing the reek of withered weeds, or the drifted and sodden
Splendors of woodland, as whose piously groaneth in spirit:
“Vanity, verily; yea, it is vanity, let me forsake it!
Yea, let it fade, for Life is the empty clash of a cymbal,
Joy a torch in the hands of a fool, and Beauty a pitfall!”

II.

Once, I remember, when years had the long duration of ages,
Came, with November, despair; for summer had vanished forever.
Lover of light, my boyish heart as a lover's was jealous,
Followed forsaking suns and felt its passion rejected,
Saw but Age and Death, in the whole wide circle of Nature
Throned forever; and hardly yet have I steadied by knowledge
Faith that faltered and patience that was but a weary submission.
Though to the right and left I hear the call of the huskers
Scattered among the rustling shocks, and the cheerily whistled
Lilt of an old plantation tune from an ebony teamster,
These behold no more than the regular jog of a mill-wheel
Where, unto me, there is possible end and diviner beginning.
Silent are now the flute of Spring and the clarion of Summer
As they had never been blown: the wail of a dull *Miserere*
Heavily sweeps the woods, and, stifled, dies in the valleys.

III.

Who are they that prate of the sweet consolation of Nature?
They who fly from the city's heat for a month to the sea-shore,
Drink of unsavory springs, or camp in the green Adirondacks?
They, long since, have left with their samples of ferns and of algæ,
Memories carefully dried and somewhat lacking in color,
Gossip of tree and cliff and wave and modest adventure,
Such as a graceful sentiment—not too earnest—admits of,
Heard in the pause of a dance or bridging the gaps of a dinner.
Nay, but I, who know her, exult in her profligate seasons,
Turn from the silence of men to her fancied, fond recognition,
I am repelled at last by her sad and cynical humor.
Kinder, cheerier now, were the pavements crowded with people,
Walls that hide the sky, and the endless racket of business.
There a hope in something lifts and enlivens the current,
Face seeth face, and the hearts of a million, beating together,
Hidden though each from other, at least are outwardly nearer,
Lending the life of all to the one,—bestowing and taking,
Weaving a common web of strength in the meshes of contact,

Close, yet never impeded, restrained, yet delighting in freedom.
 There the soul, secluded in self, or touching its fellow
 Only with horny palms that hide the approach of the pulses,
 Driven abroad, discovers the secret signs of its kindred,
 Kisses on lips unknown, and words on the tongue of the stranger.
 Life is set to a statelier march, a grander accordance
 Follows its multitudinous steps of dance and of battle :
 Part hath each in the music ; even the sacredest whisper
 Findeth a soul unafraid and an ear that is ready to listen.

IV.

Nature ? 'T is well to sing of the glassy Bandusian fountain,
 Shining Ortygian beaches, or flocks on the meadows of Enna,
 Linking the careless life with the careless mood of the Mother.
 We, afar and alone, confronted with heavier questions,
 Robbed of the oaten pipe before it is warm in our fingers,
 Why should we feign a faith ?—why crown an indifferent goddess ?
 Under the gray, monotonous vault what carolling song-bird
 Hopes for an echo ? Closer and lower the vapors are folded ;
 Sighing shiver the woods, though drifted leaves are unrusted ;
 Ghosts of the grasses that fled with a breath and floated in sunshine
 Hang unstirred on brier and fence ; for a new desolation
 Comes with the rain, that, chilly and quietly creeping at nightfall,
 Thence for many a day shall dismally drizzle and darken.

V.

"See !" (methinks I hear the mechanical routine repeated.)
 "Emblems of faith in the folded bud and the seed that is sleeping !"
 Knowledge, not Faith, deduced the similitude ; how shall an emblem
 Give to the soul the steadfast truth that alone satisfies it ?
 Joy of the Spring I can feel, but not the preaching of Autumn.
 Earth, if a lesson is wrought upon each of thy radiant pages,
 Give us the words that sustain us, and not the words that discourage !
 Sceptic art thou become, the breeder of doubt and confusion,
 Powerless vassal of Fate, assuming a meek resignation,
 Yielding the forces that moved in thy life and made it triumphant !

VI.

Now, as my circle of home is slowly swallowed in darkness,
 As with the moan of winds the rain is drearily falling,—
 Hopes that drew as the sun and aims that stood as the pole-star
 Fading aloof from my life as though it never had known them,—
 Where, when the wont is deranged, shall I find a permanent foothold ?
 Stripped of the rags of Time I see the form of my being,
 Born of all that ever has been, and haughtily reaching
 Forward to all that comes,—yet certain, this moment, of nothing.
 Chide or condemn as ye may, the truant and mutinous spirit
 Turns on itself, and forces release from its holiest habit ;
 Soars where the suns are sprinkled in cold, illimited darkness,
 Peoples the spheres with far diviner forms of existence,
 Questions, conjectures at will ; for Earth and its creeds are forgotten.

Thousands of æons it gathers, yet scarce its feet are supported ;
 Dumb is the universe unto the secrets of Whence ? and of Whither ?
 So, as a dove through the summits of ether falling exhausted,
 Under it yawns the blank of an infinite Something — or Nothing !

VII.

Let me indulge in the doubt, for this is the token of freedom,
 This is all that is safe from hands that would fain intermeddle,
 Thrusting their worn phylacteries over the eyes that are seeking
 Truth as it shines in the sky, not truth as it smokes in their lantern.
 Ah, shall I venture alone beyond the limits they set us,
 Bearing the spark within till a breath of the Deity fan it
 Into an upward-pointing flame ? — and, forever unquiet,
 Nearer through error advance, and nearer through ignorant yearning ?
 Yes, it must be : the soul from the soul cannot hide or diminish
 Aught of its essence : here the duplicate nature is ended :
 Here the illusions recede, at man's unassailable centre,
 And the nearness and farness of God are all that is left him.

VIII.

Lo ! as I muse, there come on the lonely darkness and silence
 Gleams like those of the sun that reach his uttermost planet,
 Inwardly dawning ; and faint and sweet as the voices of waters
 Borne from a sleeping mountain-vale on a breeze of the midnight,
 Falls a message of cheer : " Be calm, for to doubt is to seek whom
 None can escape, and the soul is dulled with an idle acceptance.
 Crying, questioning, stumbling in gloom, thy pathway ascendeth ;
 They with the folded hands at the last relapse into strangers.
 Over thy head, behold ! the wing with its measureless shadow
 Spread against the light, is the wing of the Angel of Unfath,
 Chosen of God to shield the eyes of men from His glory.
 Thus through mellower twilights of doubt thou climbest undazzled,
 Mornward ever directed, and even in wandering guided.
 God is patient of souls that reach through an endless creation,
 So but His shadow be seen, but heard the trail of His mantle ! "

IX.

Breathless and silent I sit, and clearer now is the message :
 " Showing Himself as to thee he is shown, he liveth in all men.
 So, on the wings of desires that never were framed for fulfilment,
 Soar as thou list, but stand in love on the earth with thy fellows.
 Still will the mystery haunt, the infinite problem perplex thee,
 Still the flesh will fail and the weight of the day be a burden,
 Yet the self, that reigns in the soul, the heart must abolish
 Less by strength of its own than the one immortal example, —
 Christ, of infinite pity, divine, inexhaustible pardon,
 Healing the wounds of time, and righting the wrongs of existence,
 Comforter, Saviour, Brother of Man and Son of the Father ! "

Bayard Taylor.

MR. BURLINGAME AS AN ORATOR.

THOSE who were personally intimate, or even casually acquainted, with the late Mr. Burlingame will remember his ease and fluency of speech in ordinary conversation. But writing was labor and weariness to him. It seemed impossible for him to establish a rapid transit between his brain and the end of a pen. What he prepared in the way of official communication was graceful, strong, and effective, but it was generally, if not always, the result of dictation to an amanuensis, whilst he walked back and forth, phrasing aloud as though he were directly addressing an eager and interested listener.

Mr. Burlingame's public speeches, whether in the legislative chamber, or the American platform, or as ambassador at the courts of the civilized world, were always prepared with great elaboration and with minute attention to details. But not one word was ever written. He possessed the rare and singular faculty of not only casting the general outline of his discourse, but of ordering also the exact style of his diction, without resorting to the use of note or memorandum to aid his memory. His habit was to form in his own mind a clear and accurate comprehension of the subject, to mark its natural divisions, and thoroughly analyze its sequences and connections, and then with utmost care to frame the sentences and paragraphs which should make up the speech. After silently and thoroughly digesting the whole subject, rhetorically as well as logically, he would repeat the entire oration aloud, over and over again. He used frequently to say "that no one could tell how a phrase or sentence would strike the ear of an audience until it was tested by actual hearing." And in the same connection he would add that he "very often changed and corrected the structure of a whole paragraph on

finding that the way he had *thought it out* was not the way that *sounded best*." Charles James Fox had no confidence in the effect upon the House of Commons of a speech that read well; and Mr. Burlingame seemed to have a similar intuition in regard to the requirements of both the popular and the parliamentary ear.

With a speech thus prepared, Mr. Burlingame's delivery was exceedingly effective. He spoke with the unerring correctness of one who had thoroughly studied his part, and yet with the absolute freshness and apparent spontaneity of a man who had sprung to his feet with the abundant fulness of the subject and the uncontrollable impulse of the occasion. And he had the remarkable gift of retaining this freshness and spontaneity, no matter how frequently he repeated the speech. And the precision of his repetition was among the noteworthy features of his oratory. In what is termed a campaign speech it is difficult for the best filled mind and the readiest tongue to make more than one really valuable effort. The issues to be discussed on successive days, pending one election, are so entirely identical as to admit of but slight variation in the mode of their presentation by the same speaker. The prince of all campaign orators, Tom Corwin of Ohio, was in the habit of saying that "a man who should attempt a fresh speech on every stump would never have any speech worth listening to." While, therefore, it is to be expected that a general similarity will of necessity pervade the speeches of any man who attempts to discuss the issues of a political campaign, it was peculiar to Mr. Burlingame to deliver day after day the same speech exactly, *verbatim et literatim et punctuatim*. And he was wise in so doing. Any attempt to change the thread of his argument or to vary the felicitous illustrations of

his rhetoric would have deranged the entire framework of that which he so fitly compacted and joined together. He always kept in mind that he had a different audience every day, and that no matter how hackneyed the speech became to himself it was fresh and new to each succeeding crowd of hearers. But, in fact, the speech did not become hackneyed to himself, for the moment he faced a sympathetic audience he partook of their temper, grew elated with their interest, and forgot in the intensity of to-day's magnetism that he was repeating the sayings of yesterday.

And it was the magnetism of Mr. Burlingame that made him pre-eminently effective before an assemblage of the people. What we mean precisely by magnetism it might be difficult to define, but it is undoubtedly true that Mr. Burlingame possessed an immense reserve of that subtle, forceful, overwhelming power which the word *magnetism* is used to signify. It was with him, as with every one that has it, quite independent of volition, not in any sense under his control, and not indeed influencing others until it had made him all aglow with its fiery enthusiasm. *Si vis me flere, dolendum est primum ipsi tibi.* Mr. Burlingame was not an actor; he never simulated a part, and he never sought to stir his hearers with a passion or a sentiment with which he was not himself profoundly stirred in advance. In Mr. Webster's famous description of Samuel Dexter, he says that "the earnestness of his conviction wrought conviction in others." It was so with Mr. Burlingame. What he believed he believed with such intensity, what he spoke he spoke with such fervor, that the unbidden impulse was "to believe and assent and be convinced," we again quote Mr. Webster, "because it was gratifying and delightful to think and feel and believe in unison with him."

And this power which Mr. Burlingame possessed was not dependent on language, though of course it was greatly

deepened and strengthened by it. But its influence was never more potential and commanding than at the capital of China, where, after seven years of brilliant success as American Minister, he was selected by the government to represent the Celestial Empire at all the courts of earth. He did not understand the Chinese language, did not attempt to write it, and never essayed to speak it; and yet, through the broken circuit of an interpreter, the current of his magnetism reached the Mandarins of Peking as effectively as his living voice ever electrified a Boston audience in Faneuil Hall.

And this is no small praise. Indeed, Mr. Burlingame's success at Peking will always remain the distinguishing feature of his remarkable career. The eminence he achieved, the influence he exerted, and the reputation he acquired in China are almost without parallel. Prior to Mr. Burlingame, our country had been represented at the Chinese court by ministers of superior culture and commanding talent. Away back in John Tyler's day we had Caleb Cushing, then in the early prime of an illustrious career. He went to China full of learning, a linguist of rare attainments, with diplomatic talent of the highest order, thoroughly learned in international law, and with an acute intellect singularly fitted to cope with and control the mind of the Orient. A few years later, in Mr. Fillmore's Presidency, we sent Humphrey Marshall of Kentucky to represent us at Peking. Less eminent in culture than Mr. Cushing, he is scarcely the inferior of any man in natural ability. To the talent of the Marshalls, conspicuous and brilliant through four generations, he added the blood and the brains of the Birneys. He went upon his mission when young, with military laurels won in the Mexican war, and with the further prestige of a distinguished career in Congress. Following Marshall we had William B. Reed of Pennsylvania, sent thither by his devoted personal friend, President Buchanan. Mr. Reed has long been a leading member of the Philadelphia

bar, learned not merely in the law, but with generous culture outside the limits of his profession, and regarded by those who know him best as among the readiest and most acute of American jurists. Such were the men whom Mr. Burlingame succeeded in his diplomatic career. It is not stating the case too strongly to say that at no European court did we have superior talent during the service of the three gentlemen we have named. And yet the influence of these men, with all their conceded gifts and accomplishments, did not compare with the influence exerted by Mr. Burlingame. Indeed, it was the testimony of Sir Frederic Bruce, who was at Pekin as the representative of England, at the same time, that no foreign minister had ever gained such ascendancy in the councils of the Chinese as Mr. Burlingame. His selection, therefore, for the most important mission which China ever sent to Christian nations was not matter of accident or luck, but grew naturally from the exalted estimate placed upon his ability and fitness by the leading minds of the Pekin government. As an example of the influence of a single man, attained over an alien race, whose civilization is widely different, whose religious belief is totally opposite, whose language he could not read nor write nor speak, Mr. Burlingame's career in China will always be regarded as an extraordinary event, not to be accounted for except by conceding to him a peculiar power of influencing those with whom he came in contact; a power growing out of a mysterious gift, partly intellectual, partly spiritual, largely physical; a power whose laws are unknown, whose origin cannot be traced, and whose limits cannot be assigned; a power which, for the want of a more comprehensive and significant term, recur-

ring to our postulate, we designate as magnetism.

And this, in fine, was his power as an orator. It was not so much what he said as the magnetic manner of his saying it, that gave a peculiar charm and force to his words. Dependent on this quality for success, he sometimes failed, for "lack of inspiration," as he termed it. The very same speech on one occasion would carry his hearers to the highest pitch of enthusiasm, and the triumph be repeated perhaps a score of times; and yet another effort, and he would fail. He could not get himself *ex rapport* with his audience, and the whole speech would prove the dreariest of drudgery to him. His success in 1856, advocating the cause of Fremont, and again in 1860 as the supporter of Lincoln, was a leading feature in each of those memorable campaigns. In New England, in the Middle States, in the West, he was equally and immensely popular. It is perhaps not extravagant to assert that, so far as public speaking contributed to Republican victory in the nation, no one bore a more conspicuous and influential part than Mr. Burlingame. And seven years' absence from American association had not diminished his power over American audiences. His addresses, made when he passed through our country in 1868, as the head of the Chinese Embassy, were full of his old force and fire. And had he lived to realize his cherished desire of once more participating in the public and political affairs of his native land, he would have taken and maintained a foremost position. But this final triumph was not reserved for him. His career closed suddenly, and, to mortal vision, prematurely. He died at the early age of forty-seven, lamented, honored, beloved, on three continents.

REVIEWS AND LITERARY NOTICES.

Only a Fiddler. A Danish Romance. By HANS CHRISTIAN ANDERSEN. New York. Hurd and Houghton.

It seems to us that this romance is not only much better than that of Herr Andersen, which we noticed two months ago, but an improvement even upon "The Improvisatore," which we were then inclined to think the best of the author's works. "Only a Fiddler" is almost as good as "The Improvisatore," in respect to the charm of the different characters and the setting of the story, while the plot is far more connected and interesting than that of "O. T.," in which the succession of events retarded quite as often as hastened the *dénouement*. There is more vitality of general purpose, more certainty of design, in the details of this than in either of the other romances. The author speaks scornfully of realism in fiction, but he is a pre-Raphaelite in some things; and he is apt to spend so much time upon the beautiful rendering of particulars in his pictures, as to lose his control over the whole effect; but here everything promotes this. That there is much novelty in the types presented we believe we cannot say; and we do not know that it is granted to more than two or three very great poets to create more than two or three characters, which are thereafter obliged to produce the desirable variety in the different fictions by changes of attitude and expression. Herr Andersen's hero, as far as we have made his acquaintance, is likely in each of the author's works to be an unworldly-minded, innocent-hearted youth, placed at odds with mankind by a blot upon his birth, or by the possession of genius, — which is, perhaps, the worst sort of illegitimacy. After a gloomy or weirdly pathetic childhood, this hero falls in love with the most unattainable young lady he can set eyes on, and lives for her, and loses her to her great advantage, and wins somebody he had no notion of getting; or, as in the case of the fiddler, dies of his broken hope. The maiden in his case is more than commonly hard-hearted, or no-hearted: she is the beautiful daughter of a Jewess and a Norwegian noble, with whom the Jewess

had played her noble Danish lover false. In their childhood, this little Naomi and Christian (the fiddler) meet, and he never ceases to love her through all the changes of fortune that lift her so far above him, when the Danish count takes her and rears her as his own daughter. She grows up a brilliant, lovely, wicked girl, who attracts all that is bad from her surroundings. She has a strong brain and a strong will, and submits them both to a handsome, ignorant savage of a gypsy circus-rider, with whom she elopes and with whom she wanders about Europe in a man's dress. But finally she marries a French marquis, and is left in perfect prosperity and unhappiness; while poor Christian, the musician, having failed to win the fame on which he had set his heart, greatly for her sake, dies in poverty and loneliness.

This is the outline of a work which is full of the most charming lights, the most melancholy shadows, the most pathetic blending of both. In Christian's father the sadness and the humor meet with delightful result: he is so filled with the memory of his youthful travels in southern countries, that he is forever sighing for them, and at last to see them once more he leaves wife and child, and enlists in a southward-marching army. He is reported killed; but he has been taken prisoner to Russia, which is far more unlike Italy than Denmark even, and when he returns home and finds his wife married a second time, he sets his face towards Rome, where he ends as a lay-brother in a Capuchin convent.

The darkest figure in the book is Christian's godfather, who is conjecturally Naomi's father, and who, with all good and beautiful impulses, has been forced by evil passions in his youth to the commission of two dreadful crimes. In very strong contrast to him is the benevolent shipmaster, Peter Vieck, who does not torment Christian by telling him of the possibilities of his genius under efficient protection, as the Count does, but places him where he can study his art with the best musician the shipmaster knows. This is Mr. Knepus of Odense, who with his admirable lady thus appears to the reader: —

"It was in the last days of April when Christian, with his little bundle under his arm, and the letter of introduction from Peter Vieck in his hand, stood upon two stone steps and knocked with the iron knocker upon the ever-closed door.

"A thin lady, with fluttering and somewhat dirty cap-ribbons, opened the door. That was Mrs. Knepus.

"*'You are, probably, Mr. Peter Vieck's foster-son?'* said she, welcoming him, pressed his hand, and conducted him amid a torrent of words through the long passage, which was not very cleanly swept, but which yet was strewn with fresh sand. Two old gravestones, which, on the breaking up of the church of the Grey Brothers, had been purchased together with several monumental tablets, ornamented the naked walls, and one did not rightly know whether here one was in a chapel or in a dwelling-house.

"*'We lead a very quiet life here,'* said the lady; *'the shooting-club and the king's birthday are the only two festivals in which Knepus takes any part. He amuses himself, as you will see, in his own way.'*

"With this the man himself made his appearance. He wore a dirty, yellow night-cap on his bald, pointed head, and a somewhat narrow overcoat, which did the duty of a sleeping-coat, for it was bound round the waist with a leathern belt. A pair of drawers completed the whole costume of the shrivelled legs."

"The walls of one room were pasted over with caricatures, and round about hung all kinds of instruments. Upon a shelf play-things were hung; but the child for which these were intended, Mr. Knepus himself, lay in bed. Upon a table before him steamed a spirit-lamp, with a little punch-bowl. The child, from time to time, took a draught and looked through a perspective-glass. The servant changed the pictures when Mr. Knepus nodded with his head, and his wife read aloud to him in one of the German classics. These Mr. Knepus called his *'childish hours,'* and he had them every evening. As soon as he sunk his head wearily upon the pillow, and returned no answer to the question of his wife, *'Art thou sleeping, my little lamb?'* she and the servant glided softly out of the room, and were their own masters.

"Thus also now lay Mr. Knepus in his bed, and as the company this evening was so numerous, he proposed a game at forfeits,

in which he in bed, and the rest out of it, could take part; and which, according to his opinion, must be uncommonly amusing. Christian was sentenced to give Mrs. Knepus a kiss under the great carpet, which her husband threw over her. The good Christian closed his eyes and commended himself to God. At length he received a glass of punch, and in the end went to his room in the most cheerful state of mind. The greater part of the room was occupied as a great repository, in which were arranged the collected works of Wieland, Schulzen's *'Handbook of Medicine,'* and the remainder entirely musical works. An ancient gravestone, that had its origin also in the now disappeared convent of the Grey Brothers, stood with all its saintly images at the foot of his somewhat short bedstead, composed of an old arm-chair and a kneading-trough. Behind the gravestone hung a smoked salmon and several pounds of candles; just beside stood a butter-cask: two chairs and a table completed the whole of his chamber furniture.

"*'Now I have arranged everything quite conveniently,'* said Mrs. Knepus, as she conducted the young inmate to his chamber. *'In the table-draw you can keep your clean linen; and here, under your bed, is a knapsack in which you can put your dirty things; because order must rule in everything. Mr. Knepus goes, to be sure, always below to the pump to wash himself; but a young man like you shall have everything as it ought to be. Here you have a beer-bottle with water; you can, perhaps, pour the water over your hands out of the window when you wash yourself: when opportunity occurs we will buy a wash-basin.'*

The whole study of this amusingly slipshod household is in the best vein of the author, whose humor certainly gains from the despised spirit of realism in which he paints the Knepuses. One more glimpse of the picture we must give, advising the reader, however, that the characters so fully presented are not important ones in the story. One night when Christian had returned home late, —

"He suddenly heard a scraping sound at the window; at any other time he would have paid no attention to it, but now! He covered himself in bed and looked toward the window; the head of a human being was moving before it. He now recognized the voice; it was that of Mrs. Knepus. *'I must steal,'* said the lady, as she

boldly swung herself into our hero's chamber, who presented himself to her in that selfsame nightly costume in which Gil Blas and other heroes have stood.

"The servant-maid could not manage to make the quantity of butter which Mrs. Knepus allowed for weekly consumption hold out, and this the mistress said was only owing to her wastefulness; and that she might prove the truth of this, she laid a wager of three marks with the girl that she would make the allotted portion of butter last out the week. But, in order that the lady might not go and eke out the quantity from that which was in the store-room, which, as we know, was Christian's bedroom, the servant was to keep the key when he was gone to bed. The lady, however, found herself short in her calculation; but for all that she would not lose her wager, because upon that depended three marks and her reputation. From this cause she vaulted, at this hour of night, through the window into the little garret, — to steal from herself.

" 'I am in a horrible situation,' said she; 'if anybody saw me getting through the window in this way, what would they say? But I do it on account of my honor, and "to the pure all things are pure!"'

"And the lady helped herself to the butter."

We do not know that any personage of the story is infamously done, and the persons are of sufficient number to have excused some inefficiency of characterization. As is usual with Andersen's romances, this is told in what affects one as a series of episodes, though every chapter as a whole contributes to the progress of the story. Of the passages which are to be chiefly admired in and for themselves, none is more touching and remarkable than that which presents the tragedy of Steffen-Margaret, — of the poor wretch who would have turned from her life of sin, and could only do so through death's door. Let us make haste to secure our author against a supposition that his story deals much with such characters. In the vast range of his romance, this one appears naturally with the rest, and is neither invited nor repelled. It is, in fact, an air of freedom in the movements of the persons which is one of the greatest charms of the book: they come and go; perhaps we see them but once; they are never strictly accounted for; the changes wrought in them by time are only incidentally noted.

It will be easily believed that this romance abounds in happy descriptions, and that it is full of Denmark as well as humanity; a book by Andersen could not be otherwise. The only thing to say against it is that it is too sad for so gloomy a world as we are obliged actually to live in.

The translation is more vulnerable; it is mainly good, but the foreign order is too often retained, and occasionally the translator seems to forget that he ought to be writing English.

The Handy-Book of Husbandry: A Guide for Farmers, Young and Old. By GEORGE E. WARING, JR., of Ogden Farm. Illustrated. (Sold by subscription.) New York: E. B. Treat & Co.

We own that we praise Mr. Waring's book without any of that practical knowledge of farming which has enabled him to write it; but we cannot carry our candor to the vicious excess of pretending ignorance of the very obvious merits of the book, namely, its clear, straightforward method, its sensible style, and its wholesome limitations in matters of theory and advice. The spirit of the work is revealed in a passage of the Preface, which we shall do it the service to quote, and which we think will put every one in good-humor with it: —

"It is sad to look back to the days when 'Agriculture' was a rosy future with me; when my work was done with the regularity and precision of clock-work by cheap and respectable farm hands; when my crops were all large and my cattle were all fat; when an analysis of my soil, and a chemical ledger-account with each field, kept fertility at the top mark; and when the balance-sheet at the end of the year was always adding to my fortune, — and then to bring my sobered gaze down over the hillside of hard realities that ended in a plain of simple 'Farming,' of humdrum hard work, dear labor, scant manure, small crops, bad markets, sick animals, and — the least in the world — a sick heart; with 'soil analysis' an *ignis-fatuus*, and nothing but patience and toil and skill and experience and hard study to take its place. I make no complaint of my disappointment, for even the harder experiences of life are not without their advantages, — when they are past, — but the hope that I might turn the steps of other young farmers into pleasanter paths was not the least of my motives in writing this book."

From a farmer who writes in this spirit, it is probable that his brother-farmers will get an amount of good sense about their vocation that is seldom talked to them, or that, saving their respect, they are apt themselves to talk about it; for Mr. Waring has in his own case overcome the prejudices of the practical farmer and the enthusiasm of the book-farmer, and has reconciled the experience of the first with the ideas of the last.

The scope of the book is sufficiently great. It treats of buying and leasing farms, of fencing, buildings, and implements, of drainage, ploughing, and trenching, of manures and rotation of crops, of stock of all kinds and their management, and of the dairy in all its departments; and each of these particulars is discussed in the same temper as characterizes the passage we have quoted from the Preface. Just how much Mr. Waring's advice upon any one point is worth, the nearest farmer would be better able to say than the present critical authority; but in all modesty, we can assure that farmer, from a pretty wide conversation with recent literature, that Mr. Waring does not write in the least like a quack; whereas, and we are open to correction if wrong, many agricultural authors do. Farming seems, indeed, to have been the science destined, after medicine, to evoke the greatest charlatany and pretence; and now, if we may judge from the general tone of Mr. Waring's book, it is destined like medicine to return with an enlightened intelligence to the use of simples, and a system of wise and careful nursing.

Prenticeana; or, Wit and Humor in Paragraphs. By GEORGE D. PRENTICE. With a Biographical Sketch of the Author, by G. W. GRIFFIN. Philadelphia: Claxton, Remsen, and Haffelfinger.

WHEN Mr. Prentice, eleven years ago, made this collection (now newly republished) of paragraphs from the columns of his newspaper, the Louisville Journal, he seemed to appreciate somewhat accurately its character by writing: "I am as well aware as any one can be that there are just grounds of grave objection to this book. Probably in many things that it contains little else than partisan bitterness will be found." This is too true, and the volume would give a lay preacher sufficient texts for an historical sermon on the grievous personalities of Western

political editors thirty years ago; which doubtless might be harmlessly addressed and brought home to certain Eastern newspaper editors of to-day. A large number of these paragraphs were written in reply to quoted expressions from other contemporary editors, whose names were used often in the original publication, but are here indicated chiefly by dashes, and whose known or presumed personal habits, morals, and reputation for truth or honesty were treated as public property and characterized with such words or phrases as served the political purposes and ministered to the popular or local taste of the time.

To his well-grounded apprehension concerning this prevailing characteristic of partisan bitterness, Mr. Prentice added further concerning his paragraphs, and with no less truth: "I have no doubt that a very considerable proportion of them, which perhaps from partisan partiality were deemed 'good hits' at the time, will, now that the occasion which called them forth has passed, be read with comparatively little interest. I know that such things do not *keep well*." We feel sure that the self-criticism here hinted (with the modesty of its expression) was sincere with Mr. Prentice. And, indeed, many, very many, of these paragraphs, far removed from the heats of politics and the petty local enmities and quarrels that produced them and gave them their pertinence and force, rise up, stale, flat, and unprofitable, after a twenty years' sleep in the dusty newspaper files. Yet we know that city and country journals overflowed with these things in the palmy days of the old Whig party, when Clay was a Kentucky giant and Webster a Massachusetts Jove, and that the name of Prentice became familiar everywhere, currency for witty retorts, shrewd and humorous turns of expression, and numberless epigrammatic sayings. And perhaps, after all, wit is chiefly to be known and should be judged by its immediate influence and effect; a pun that makes nine men laugh at the dinner-table (where it keeps company with the wine) is genuine and good, in spite of the tenth man, who, with grim and dyspeptic face and in bed next morning, professes critically that there was nothing in it. Wit, like eloquence, often is to be recognized and appraised in the effervescence of the occasion, new-born; its sparkle seen and felt to-day is vague, dull, lost, to-morrow. Yet this immediately contemporary and local interest, now,

often almost entirely escaped, is only one phase, although it is not a slight one, of the book before us. There are in it hundreds of paragraphs that are as good now as they ever were, and can be still appreciated by the nine men at table, whenever they happen to come together.

This volume of Prenticeana (the title was not chosen by the author) was collected at the solicitation of the original publishers in 1859, and it was reissued, doubtless, because of a presumed revival of interest created by the recent death of Mr. Prentice. Perhaps it may be said justly that the book is hardly the best showing that might be given of his wit, for the collection, somewhat hastily made from the files of his newspaper, was almost twice as large in manuscript as in print. Mr. Prentice intrusted the sifting of this original material to one or two friends, and it may be doubted if many paragraphs were not rejected that might properly have taken precedence of many here retained. Yet, with the volume as it is, it would be difficult to deny the possession by Mr. Prentice of the abundant wit for which he had during many years a reputation by no means confined to this country.

But, although best known perhaps to the general public by his paragraphs, it is fair to say that Mr. Prentice was not merely a writer of paragraphs. He was a scholar familiar with and loving the best literature, having been while yet a child a marvel of proficiency in Greek and Latin studies, and in his youth a close and industrious student, remarkable for his memory; in his early manhood and during his life he wrote poems that showed great tenderness and delicacy of feeling, and the possession of a fine fancy; several of these have long been popular favorites; and throughout his long editorial life in Kentucky, which he entered poor and unknown in 1830, he was a man who, through his real ability and his tireless devotion to the persons and policies of his choice, exercised for many years a power and influence second to no other man in the whole Western country, second to no other editor in the land. This is hardly the place to enlarge upon his political life; we may venture to say, however, that those who judge of Mr. Prentice by his presumed attitude during the war of the Southern Rebellion judge ignorantly and uncharitably of as true a patriot, unfortunately placed, as spoke a word or drew a sword for the government. At a time when two of his sons

were in the Rebel Army (one of them, to the father's great grief, killed in battle less than a month after, against his father's anxious entreaties, he had entered the Confederate service), he was true enough to the country to volunteer himself, and shoulder a gun, in company with a very few others in a city full of Rebel personal friends, who would have idolized him had he joined their cause instead, to defend Louisville against the expected enemy. This we think worthy of record on behalf of a veteran editor who has been too carelessly regarded as a doubtful friend of his country in its time of trial. This was his time of trial, too, — a trial which, to an emotional and sensitive old man who loved his children passionately, was an ordeal of fire that did not come to many younger editors who volunteered to fight battles, and spared no presumed lukewarm comrades — on paper.

Hammer and Anvil. A Novel. By FRIEDRICH SPIELHAGEN. From the German. By WILLIAM HAND BROWN. New York: Leypoldt and Holt.

It is an open question whether this book has established in all its excessive length a *raison d'être*, at least in its English form. It will hardly hold its own in point of interest with the average three-volume novel of Great Britain, and the lesson it would teach is not brought out with the directness and clearness even of the better class of American didactic fiction. We already have abundance of both these styles of imaginative literature, and therefore we may have honest doubts as to the measure of hospitality we ought to extend in this instance to the foreigner who comes to us, not as a guest, but as a naturalized citizen of the same literary republic. If his claims to honorable consideration have no better ground than is to be found in his performance in the "Hammer and Anvil," Spielhagen will, it strikes us, have to make his way through a formidable burden of proof, in showing cause why he should be here at all.

This ponderous work, the "Hammer and Anvil," as nearly as we can understand it, designs to teach the duty of mutual helpfulness. The lesson, however, is not taught by the action of the story, but is dragged in, rather, in distinct paragraphs of reflection and whole pages of dreary monologue. Wheth-

er in the mouth of his characters, or in the author's proper person, his preaching has that vague body, without head or legs, which one discovers to be a predominant family peculiarity in a great deal of the political talk and writing of the Germans. If these pages of endless moral labels could be cut out bodily, the reader might in the first and perhaps in the second part enjoy the pleasant but delusive impression that he had met that *rara avis* of the present literary period, a novel without a purpose. Still, the three parts of the story taken in connection and read thus, without the aid of the author's too frequent scholia, would seem to convey a moral exactly opposite to the one professed, namely, the one taught in many very ordinary works of fiction in all modern languages, — that it is the duty of a healthy young man, with no money, but with great personal independence, to marry a rich wife. In spite of his virtuous lemmas and postulates, it does not become at all clear why George Hartwig, the autobiographical hero of this work, at a time when he is worth but a beggarly fifty *thalers* in the world, refused the good old Dr. Snellius's proffered loan of fifty thousand, to marry Hermine and a million. Now Herr Hartwig is, in some respects, a tolerably natural human being, notwithstanding his shadowy theories about the hammer and anvil, and we incline to the opinion that in allowing himself to be persuaded into this first marriage, while he was confessedly in love with her who was to be his second wife, he acted, as much as he does at any other time, in conformity to the dictates of our fallen nature. From a worldly point of view, at least, it was the most successful and practical stroke of business of the many he has to record of himself.

There are some dramatic scenes in the book, and some good characterization; but the former are by no means great, and the latter is never quite natural and consistent throughout. There is to be observed, too, the fatality which seems so generally to attend imaginative works overburdened with high precept, that the bad characters are the best drawn and act much more like human beings than the model heroes and heroines. If the story were not told in the first person singular, it would be difficult to see how the most patient reader could ever get through it. The autobiographical form and a personal narrative have a stronghold in human curiosity which, in this instance, six hundred and ninety-one large pages can-

not wholly break down. The unity and the natural touches which this form of telling his story have forced upon Spielhagen are, we confess, the only things which have lent interest enough to the "Hammer and Anvil" to get us through its interminable length.

The Flying Mail. By M. GOLDSCHMIDT.

Old Olaf. By MAGDALEN THORESON.

The Railroad and the Churchyard. By

BJÖRNSTJERNE BJÖRNSON. Translated by

CARL LARSEN. Boston and Cambridge :

Sever, Francis, & Co.

WE tried to tell the reader some months ago what kind of writer Björnson is, and we do not know that his story in this collection affords cause for fresh dissertation upon him. It is of his realistic rather than his idyllic mood; but as his delicacy never fails him, the portraits of the simple, kind-hearted, sensitive Canute Aakre, and the shrewd, hard, unscrupulously ambitious Lars Hogstad are as exquisitely painted as any ideal figure that the poet has done. The story is only the narrative of these two country politicians, in their early friendship and their later rivalry, the success of Lars in having the railroad run through the old village churchyard, which Canute had striven to protect from the sacrilege, and the final triumph of the latter in the good offices which he renders Lars when a spark from one of the first-passing locomotives has burned that successful man out of house and home. It is all very interesting, because it make us so intimately acquainted with the working of the local political machinery in Norway, and, better still, with the character of the people and their feeling when confronted with such modern thoughts as shake mankind through the railway and the steamship. The author has availed himself of the right of every one who tells a good story, to omit the application.

Björnson is further represented in this book by two little tales which are not named in the title, "The Eagle's Nest" and "The Father," and which are wonderful in showing how much can be achieved in small space with simplest material and the quietest manner. One merely tells how the young man that climbed to the eagle's nest slipped and fell dead at the feet of his betrothed; the other, how the ever-prospered father was not truly blest in his only son

till he had lost him; but in the limits of these narrow plots the author contrives to touch the strongest chords in his reader with thrilling and irresistible force. Only himself can do justice to the idea of his most sincere and unaffected art.

In "The Flying Mail" we are charmingly made acquainted with a Danish writer hitherto strange to us, who shows himself master of a very neat and accurate knowledge of the human heart as affected by love and society. The pretty conceit of the young man intrusting to the winds a declaration of love for that unseen and unknown fair, one syllable of whose conjectured name they have blown into his attic window, is sufficiently daring, but it is managed with the utmost skill and grace; and in the slightly sketched personages, Ingeborg and Miss Brandt, we realize two very lifelike and natural people. It is in them, and in the surpassing daintiness and the fine humor with which their characters are indicated, that the new author secures his hold upon the reader, and that will make him welcome with whatever romance he appears hereafter.

Mrs. Thoresen, who writes "Old Olaf," is also a Dane, but Norway is her home, and the poetical feeling of her story is rather like that of Björnson than of Goldschmidt. She reminds us here and there of the former, as if she had made a study of his method; and her story is the least forcibly original of all in the book. This is not saying that it is not very touching in matter and good in form, we hope; for it is all this, and something better: studied from nature, we should think, as well as from Björnson, and characterized by a pure womanly feeling. We must add also that the sex of the author is shown in her disregard of human life among her characters, for she apparently thinks nothing of destroying one generation of lovers, that another may profit by their sad fate.

First Steps in English Literature. By ARTHUR GILMAN, A. M. New York: Hurd and Houghton.

THIS little book is a creditable attempt to reduce the study of English literature to the form of a scientific treatise. The works which it is designed to supplant have been composed almost entirely of details of the lives, and unsatisfactory quotations from the

writings of individual authors. Mr. Gilman has avoided this error, and has produced a manual of unquestionable value. Whether it is adapted in every way to the uses of a text-book, only the practical teacher can say. It may be hardly simple enough for schools, and hardly full enough for colleges, and it must in any case, as is evidently the intention of the author, be studied in connection with more exhaustive reading or lectures.

The careful charts, introducing each main division of the subject, and the "Bibliography" at the end of the volume, are what will make it especially valuable to the general reader as a book of reference. American literature has not been slightly passed over, as it is so often in works of this kind. The general divisions of the subject are, it strikes us, very good and philosophical, and we wish we could say the same of some of Mr. Gilman's definitions. It is awful to think what will be the feelings of those who produce the average magazine and newspaper poetry, when they read, under the head of "Definition of Terms," this edict of exclusion against themselves as follows: "Poets are those writers who so combine the materials of the natural and moral world as to present them in new shapes, or in unaccustomed or affecting points of view, and in metrical language." Mr. Gilman, however, is not peculiarly severe upon poets, for if he has succeeded in carrying out his purpose, he has placed his book outside of his own definition of literature.

Days in North India. By NORMAN MACLEOD, D. D., Author of "Wee Davie," "Eastward," etc., and Editor of "Good Words." Profusely illustrated. Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott & Co.

DR. MACLEOD was of course justified in writing of what interested him most in North India, but at first thought it seems not quite fortunate for his readers that it was the memories of the Sepoy mutiny which most interested him there. It is hard to have that story circumstantially rehearsed again in a book where you had a right to look for fresh speculations, if not fresh information, about Indian life; though the sense of loss proves not so great as it would have been if, in the few passages the author gives to his own experiences, he had shown himself a better observer than he does. He is not a good observer, we should say, nor

a good philosophizer of his facts ; and for a thoroughly earnest book we do not know of one more entirely trivial and empty than this. The humor is of the kind that we are glad to get from the pulpit, but that we do not find it so easy to smile at on week-days, and the eloquence has the loose texture of sermons. Neither the past nor the present of India is sufficient to make the author say anything not perfectly expected and commonplace ; but with the help of the beautiful pictures of Saracenic and Hindoo architecture, the descriptions of certain tombs and temples becomes agreeable reading. What is the oddest thing is, that in the vast empire, which we have always supposed to be teeming with millions of native population, Dr. Macleod seems to have seen only three or four Indians.

Report on Education. By JOHN W. HOYT, United States Commissioner to the Paris Universal Exposition in 1867. Washington : Government Printing-Office. 1870.

MORE than fifty pages octavo of this able Report are given to a general comparative review of the state of education of every one of the European nations, and of Brazil, the Argentine Republic, Hawaii, the Canadian Provinces, and the United States of America. It may surprise some of us to know that the United States by no means bears the palm, in the proportion of public appropriations, for even the primary education, nor in the proportion of the comparative number of children educated ; but must yield this at least to all the German States, to Scandinavia, Holland, and Switzerland. That the superior education is beyond all comparison in Europe has been always conceded ; but we have generally supposed ourselves beyond all nations in the diffusion of primary education, which term in this Report includes what we call the grammar schools.

To say nothing of Prussia, with its 25,000 primary schools alone, in Saxony, with a population of 2,000,000, 331,854 pupils are in the primary schools. In Baden, with a population of 1,500,000, there are 15,000 primary schools. Ninety-four per cent of the children of the German provinces of Austria are in the primary schools. In the canton of Berne, whose population is 500,000 (less than that of the city of New York), there are 13,393 primary schools, as

well as thirty high schools, five gymnasia, six normal schools, one real (or practical) school, two cantonal schools, and one university, besides one hundred and forty-four private institutions. In Zug, with a population of 2,000, there are forty-five primary schools, besides a university, and thirty-nine superior schools, of which only five are private.

But it is not the comparative number of educational opportunities that is most noticeable in this comparative review, but the quality of the schools, as shown in the comparison of the courses of study and methods of teaching. Instead of being confined to reading, writing, and mental arithmetic, as most of our country primary schools are, singing and logical exercises (that is, careful oral exercises in the power of expressing what is impressed by a superintended observation) are included in the teaching of all below eight years of age ; and in the grade of schools corresponding to our so-called grammar schools, geometry, drawing, the science of music, gymnastics, history, geography, and natural history are always included in the course.

Nor is it even by enumerating the things taught that we can fully estimate the superior quality of European primary education, but we must consider the *quality* of the teachers ; for, as Dr. Hoyt says, "the excellence of whatever schools are excellent, of whatever grade they may be, and wherever found, is to be traced to the provisions made for competent teachers" ; and he adds : "Economically considered, the expense of furnishing first-class teachers to schools otherwise poorly equipped is small as compared with schools in other respects well provided, but falling into the hands of incompetent instructors ; since the one may, to a considerable extent, supplement every other lack, while the other will assuredly pervert what he does not know how to use."

"The first movement in the German States for the careful preparation of teachers was made directly in the interest of *primary* instruction ; and the foresight that decided upon the qualification of teachers for this grade of schools is justified by the results to every other, the office of teacher, from the highest to the lowest, having become professional, permanent, remunerative, and respectable."

"To make it professional, and to give high tone as such in addition to the acquirements demanded of those who aspire to the

office of teacher, tests are adopted to ascertain the natural aptitudes of candidates for this profession, without which the wider range of scholarship may be comparatively valueless; and it is the practice to discourage all such persons as are tempted to teach as a resource, after failing in other pursuits."

"After having been accepted as candidates for normal training, each student is requested to verify, from time to time during the entire course of several years, his practical ability to make the instructions given him available to the uses intended; and any failure in this puts an end to further preparation for an office the individual is not likely to fill acceptably."

"When graduated from the instructions of the most accomplished teachers of the kingdom, a yet further test of one year, as the assistant of an accredited master, is necessary to gain the coveted position; and a failure in any particular here insures the profession riddance of so much incompetency; no attempt to make up for such failure being ever permitted in a State institution; and no such person being ever admitted to the staff of public-school instructors! Nor ought it to be omitted that any discreditable conduct, any discoverable tendency to moral delinquencies, anything but the tone and practice of a Christian gentleman, is in itself a disqualification for preparation or practice in this art of arts, so cherished and envired by the combined watchfulness of state, church, and people."

"Slowly and surely this trio has co-operated to raise the standard and improve the methods of qualifying teachers, to the end that the primary instruction of advancing years might keep pace with the growth of national prosperity and the demands of civilization." And "when all is done, and every test is satisfied, the installation of a teacher into the sacred duties of his office is made the occasion of a civil and religious ceremonial, in which the honor conferred is bound to be that of a lifelong and beloved profession."

"Of course, the wisdom of the authorities also provides for the contingencies of withdrawal from the service, when the best good of either the individual or the public demand it"; and for the support of those who have spent their lives in this public service."

"Such is the system in Prussia, and, with

slight modification, in other of the German and Scandinavian States, for qualifying, retaining, and dignifying the teachers of their primary schools"; and Dr. Hoyt contrasts it with our "almost universal habit of placing the children of our country school districts under the school management of quite young," and he should say quite untrained, "persons of either sex, because they have given, at the hastily passed over examinations, some 'smart' answers, and because they can be had cheap," which he justly characterizes as "execrable."

"Placing children in their most plastic conditions of soul and body, with every nerve and sense and faculty keenly alive to impressions, under the tuition of mere children themselves, so far as fitness for this duty comes of experience and matured observation, is a crime against the child who is the subject of it, in comparison to which allowing the child to grow up unlettered is excusable. There is no crusade that could be inaugurated in behalf of childhood and its rights so holy as a combination against such practices. Better, a thousand-fold better, send out this army of innocents, — children whose early years are not merely defrauded of their most sacred rights, but perverted to irremediable results, — to spend their school-days amid the novelties and interesting objects of nature; and while they at least invigorate their bodies, let the empty school-houses of the land bear the inscription, 'Poor teachers worse than no teachers.'"

We have let Dr. Hoyt plead for himself the value of his Report by the above extracts, in order to attract to it the attention of those of our readers who have a voice in the election of school committees, and especially those who are ever themselves elected to discharge the duties of committees. We hope these will send to the members of Congress for copies of what should be spread broadcast over our land, and carefully studied, especially at this moment, when Mr. Prosser's speech in the last Congress has brought to view the appalling state of things in many sections of the United States with respect to the deficiency of educational opportunities, and Mr. Hoar's bill for a national compulsory education to supplement the shortcomings of the State provisions is coming up for debate.